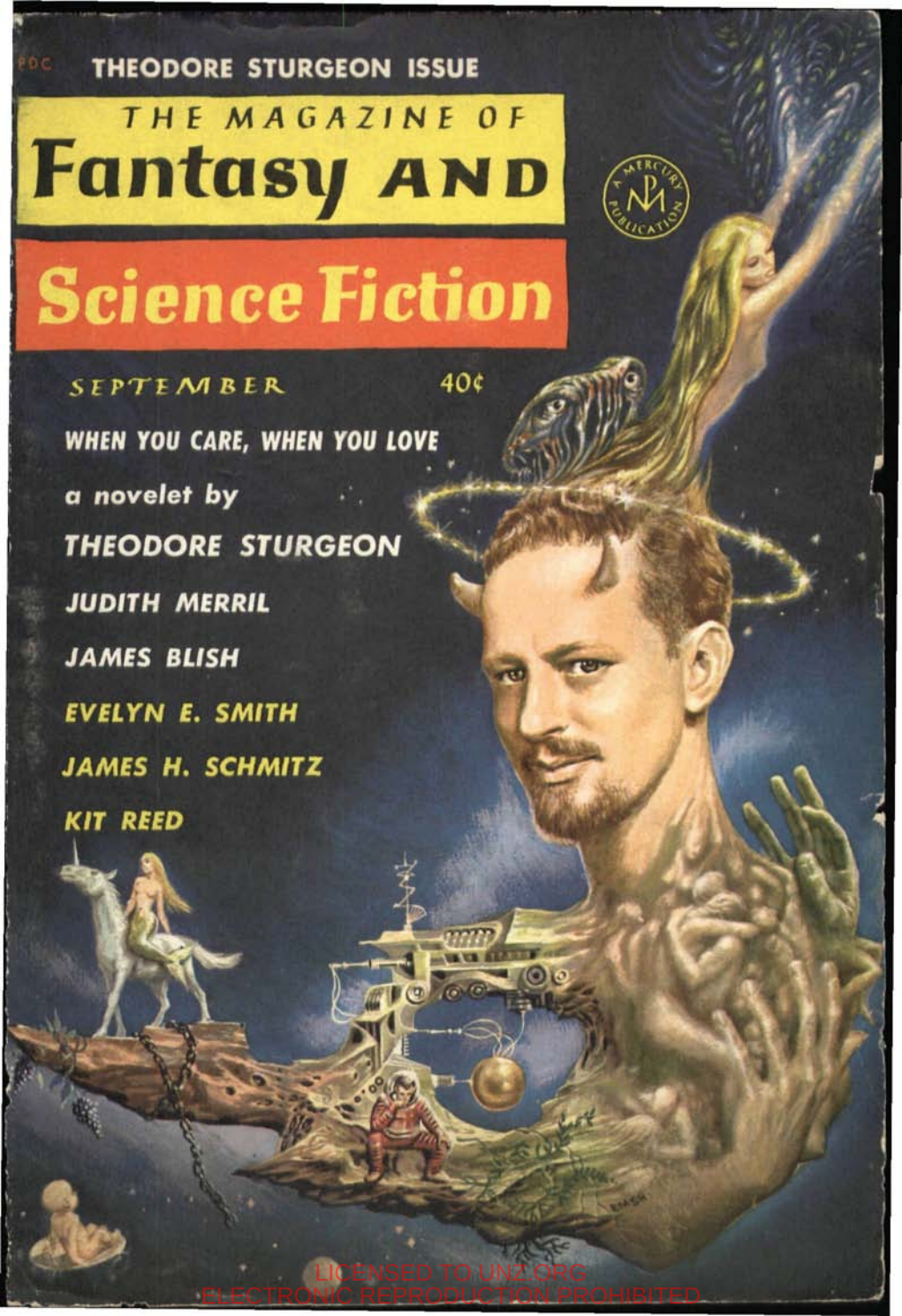

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Fantasy and Science Fiction

SEPTEMBER *Including Venture Science Fiction*

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EDITORIAL

The Milford Science Fiction Writers Conference is held every year in Pike County, Pennsylvania, in a cluster of summer cottages set among a grove of great trees where the foothills of the Pocono Mountains march along the Delaware. The company of such writers as Fritz Leiber, Damon Knight, Judith Merril, Theodore Thomas, Joe Hensley, Gordon Dickson, Richard McKenna, Kate Wilhelm, Carol Emshwiller, Terry Carr, Katherine Maclean, Joan Matheson, Fred Pohl, Alice Glaser, Keith Laumer, and Randall Garrett, and the mostalgic mood of a late afternoon by a quiet river, causes us to think sentimentally about our past memories of Science Fiction—something which is generally associated with the future. The future, however, we will leave, for the moment, to fiction and to the Fates; the shadows lengthen, the river flows on, the Delaware might almost be the Hudson, and not far from there, in the days when the Depression was great upon the land, we haunted—with dimes diverted from popsicles (root beer, preferably) and Poppy Ott books (whatever became of them?)—a second-hand magazine store. Those Elephant Folios of the early days of the SF magazines, the Gernsback *Amazing* and *Wonder*, were so cheaply come by, then. We can smell their unique scent even now, see before us the antique figures of Frank Paul, one of the great classical SF illustrators, flee with Tumithak through the Corridors, shudder over the vile Yeast Men of Dr. David H. Keller, and enter (for the first time) the Twenty-Fifth Century with Anthony ("Buck") Rogers. They don't write stories like that no more, don't try to tell us otherwise, we know better. Presently we were to invest a whole twenty cents for our first *new* SF magazine—month and year escape our by now senescent memory, but it had a story in it (we think) about protoplasmic blobs, by Stanton R. Coblenz. In those days protoplasmic blobs were really horrible, as well as educational; it is a sad commentary on the decay of our culture that protoplasmic blobs have become the sad, feeble things they have become. We presently joined the Science Fiction League, Mastered Time with Ray Cummings, read with astonished awe the first productions of such giants in the earth as Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and Theodore Sturgeon. We remember vividly the lucid comment of a fellow Boy Scout named Kelly (or, conceivably, Kelley), to wit: "You reelly *bleeve* that rocket ship stuff? Ahahahahah!! The War shook us loose from a steady devotion to the medium, the Post War period saw us

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drop it entirely. But first loves are often not easily lost. We returned to ours in the Fifties, and are still with it. Although there is much grey in our beard now, it still strikes us with a sense of wonder that we should be in any sense at all a compeer of the like of Heinlein, Asimov, Sturgeon, Leiber, Knight, Clarke, and others. It seems Not Quite Right that we dare ever presume sit in judgment on their stories. It seems a wonderful and fantastic thing that we are privileged to edit a magazine of fantasy and science fiction at all, let alone *The* Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. It is exciting to think that we are privileged to print new writers—Aandahl, Carr, Gilien, and others. Nostalgia, after all, is all very well, but you can't run a Science Fiction magazine today with blobs, shelks, and yeast men. We aren't even going to try.

— Avram Davidson

In this issue . . .

. . . there is, of course, the new **Theodore Sturgeon** story, the first of three, which, when finished, will be published as one book; plus **Judith Merril's** "personality" article on the Guest of Honor; plus **James Blish's** cameo-like critique of Sturgeon as literary craftsman; plus **Sam Moskowitz's** Sturgeon bibliography—and, for lagniappe, a short excursion into extraterrestrial zoology by **Robin Sturgeon**, penultimate child to Theodore. In addition there are funny stories by **Evelyn E. Smith** and **Suzanne Malaval**, a French author new to the U.S.; exceedingly non-funny stories by **James Schmitz** and **Gary Jennings**; a **Kit Reed** tale which deftly manages to be both light and serious at the same time, and **Dr. Asimov's** science article, which is alone worth the price of admission.

Coming soon . . .

. . . : are stories from A for **Aandahl** to Z for **Zangwill**, including one by **Mildred Clingerman**, an old-time F&SF favorite. October sees Part One of a two-part serial, *The Journey of Joenes*, marking **Robert Sheckley's** reappearance here after a too-long absence. You'll enjoy, also, in the October issue, an extra-long Books section, to make up for the necessary absence of that column from the current issue, owing to the inclusion of the special Sturgeon material.

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Introduction — WHEN YOU CARE, WHEN YOU LOVE by Theodore Sturgeon

Among the paradoxes of the kingdom of nature is this: that the golden-throated nightingale is drab, while the splendid peacock has a harsh scream for a voice. "Paradox", in the sense of "a seeming contradiction"—but of course really no contradiction at all. The splendor of song is sufficient for the nightingale. The peacock's plumage is glory enough for him. Nature, there, is neither niggardly nor lavish past measure. We have writers who sing sweetly as nightingales, writers who are gorgeous as peacocks. It is a flat fact that Theodore Sturgeon is both. As someone put it to us recently, he "has an aura." His flashing eyes, his floating hair, pan-like beard, continually sparkling wit, his alchemist's fingers, and his ardent, argent pen . . . It is around us *that the circle is thrice-woven, it is we who feed on honey-dew and drink the milk. of paradise. Much have we travelled in the realms of gold, who have read much (or even little) of his work. It seems only right, somehow, that, with all this, Theodore Sturgeon should have a beautiful wife and beautiful children as well. It seems, anyhow, not right that we can find (after long searching) nothing fresher to say at this point than this: We are proud to publish this newest story by Theodore Sturgeon. It will form (though complete in itself) part of a book, and he has promised us the privilege of publishing the other parts as they are written. The tale has its beginnings with the long, deep thoughts of Captain Gamaliel Wyke, crouching by the winter fire in his four great grey shawls, near the tolling breakers and the creaking gulls. Thus it begins. There is time enough before we consider its ending.*

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WHEN YOU CARE, WHEN YOU LOVE

by Theodore Sturgeon

HE WAS BEAUTIFUL IN HER BED.

When you care, when you love, when you treasure someone, you can watch the beloved in sleep as you watch everything, anything else—laughter, lips to a cup, a look even away from you; a stride, sun a-struggle lost in a hair-lock, a jest or a gesture—even stillness, even sleep.

She leaned close, all but breathless, and watched his lashes. Now, lashes are thick sometimes, curled, russet; these were all these, and glossy besides. Look closely—there where they curve lives light in tiny serried scimitars.

All so good, so very good, she let herself deliciously doubt its reality. She would let herself believe, in a moment, that this was real, was true, was here, had at last happened. All the things her life before had ever given her, all she had ever wanted, each by each had come to her purely for wanting. Delight there might be, pride, pleasure, even glory in the new possession of gift, privilege, object, experience: her ring, hat, toy, trip to Trinidad; yet, with possession there had always been (until now) the platter called *well, of course* on which these things were served her. For had she not wanted it? But this, now —*him,* now . . . greatest of all her wants, ever; first thing in all her life to transcend want itself and knowingly become need: this she had at last, at long (how long, now) long last, this she had now for good and all, for always, forever and never a touch of *well, of course.* He was her personal miracle, he in this bed now, warm and loving her. He was the reason and the reward of it all—her family and forbears, known by so few and felt by so many, and indeed, the whole history of mankind leading up to it, and all she herself had been and done and felt; and loving him, and losing him, and seeing him dead and bringing him back—it was all for this moment and because the moment had to be, he and this peak, this warmth in these sheets, this *now* of hers. He was all life and all life's beauty, beautiful in her bed; and now she could be sure, could believe it, believe . . .

"I do," she breathed. "I do."

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"What do you do?" he asked her. He had not moved, and did not now.

"Devil, I thought you were asleep."

"Well, I was. But I had the feeling someone was looking."

"Not looking," she said softly. "Watching." She was watching the lashes still, and did not see them stir, but between them now lay a shining sliver of the grey cool aluminum of his surprising eyes. In a moment he would look at her—just that—in a moment their eyes would meet and it would be as if nothing new had happened (for it would be the same metal missile which had first impaled her) and also as if everything, everything were happening again. Within her, passion boiled up like a fusion fireball, so beautiful, so huge—

—and like the most dreaded thing on earth, without pause the radiance changed, shifting from the hues of all the kinds of love to all the tones of terror and the colors of a cataclysm.

She cried his name . . .

And the grey eyes opened wide in fear for her fears and in astonishment, and he bounded up laughing, and the curl of his laughing lips turned without pause to the pale writhing of agony, and they shrank apart, too far apart while the white teeth met and while between them he shouted his hurt. He fell on his side and doubled up, grunting, gasping in pain . . . grunting, gasping, wrapped away from her, even her, unreachable even by her.

She screamed. She screamed. She—

A Wyke biography is hard to come by. This has been true for four generations, and more true with each, for the more the Wyke holdings grew, the less visible have been the Wyke family, for so Cap'n Gamaliel Wyke willed it after his conscience conquered him. This (for he was a prudent man) did not happen until after his retirement from what was euphemistically called the molasses trade. His ship—later, his fleet—had carried fine New England rum, made from the molasses, to Europe, having brought molasses from the West Indies to New England. Of course a paying cargo was needed for the westward crossing, to close with a third leg this profitable triangle; and what better cargo than Africans for the West Indies, to harvest the cane and work in the mills which made the molasses?

Ultimately affluent and retired, he seemed content for a time to live among his peers, carrying his broadcloth coat and snowy linen as to the manor born, limiting his personal adornment to a massive golden ring and small square gold buckles at his knee. Soberly shoptalking molasses often, rum seldom, slaves never, he dwelt with a

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frightened wife and a silent son, until she died and something—perhaps loneliness—coupled his brain again to his sharp old eyes, and made him look about him. He began to dislike the hypocrisy of man and was honest enough to dislike himself as well, and this was a new thing for the Cap'n; he could not deny it and he could not contain it, so he left the boy with the household staff and, taking only a manservant, went into the wilderness to search his soul.

The wilderness was Martha's Vineyard, and right through a bitter winter the old man crouched by the fire when the weather closed in, and, muffled in four great grey shawls, paced the beaches when it was bright, his brass telescope under his arm and his grim canny thoughts doing mighty battle with his convictions. In the late spring he returned to Wiscassett, his blunt certainty regained, his laconic curtness increased almost to the point of speechlessness. He sold out (as a startled contemporary described it) "everything that showed," and took his son, an awed obedient eleven, back to the Vineyard where to the accompaniment of tolling breakers and creaking gulls, he gave the boy an education to which all the schooling of all the Wykes for all of four generations would be mere addenda.

For in his retreat to the storms and loneliness of the inner self and the Vineyard, Gamaliel Wyke had come to terms with nothing less than the Decalogue.

He had never questioned the Ten Commandments, nor had he knowingly disobeyed them. Like many another before him, he attributed the sad state of the world and the sin of its inhabitants to their refusal to heed those Rules. But in his ponderings, God Himself, he at last devoutly concluded, had underestimated the stupidity of mankind. So he undertook to amend the Decalogue himself, by adding ". . . or cause . . ." to each Commandment, just to make it easier for a man to work with:

". . . or cause the Name of the Lord to be taken in vain."

". . . or cause stealing to be done.

". . . or cause dishonor to thy father and thy mother.

". . . or cause the commission of adultery.

". . . or cause a killing to be done."

But his revelation came to him when he came to the last one. It was suddenly clear to him that all mankind's folly—all greed, lust, war, all dishonor, sprang from humanity's almost total disregard for this edict and its amendment: "Thou shalt not covet . . . *nor cause covetousness!*"

It came to him then that to arouse covetousness in another is just as deadly a sin as to kill him or to cause his murder. Yet all

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around the world empires rose, great yachts and castles and hanging gardens came into being, tombs and trusts and college grants, all for the purpose of arousing the envy or covetousness of the less endowed—or having that effect no matter what the motive.

Now, one way for a man as rich as Gamaliel Wyke to have resolved the matter for himself would be St. Francis' way; but (though he could not admit this, or even recognize it) he would have discarded the Decalogue and his amendments, all surrounding Scripture and his gnarled right arm rather than run so counter to his inborn, ingrained Yankee acquisitiveness. And another way might have been to take his riches and bury them in the sand of Martha's Vineyard, to keep them from causing covetousness; the very thought clogged his nostrils with the feel of dune-sand and he felt suffocation; to him money was a living thing and should not be interred.

And so he came to his ultimate answer: Make your money, enjoy it, but *never let anyone know.* Desire, he concluded, for a neighbor's wife, or a neighbor's ass, or for anything, presupposed knowing about these possessions. No neighbor could desire anything of his if he couldn't lay a name to it.

So Gamaliel brought weight like granite and force like gravity to bear upon the mind and soul of his son Walter, and Walter begat Jedediah, and Jedediah begat Caiaphas (who died) and Samuel, and Samuel begat Zebulon (who died) and Sylva; so perhaps the true beginning of the story of the boy who became his own mother lies with Cap'n Gamaliel Wyke and his sand-scoured, sea-deep, rock-hard revelation.

—fell on his side on the bed and doubled up, grunting, gasping in pain, grunting, gasping, wrapped away from her, even her, unreachable even by her.

She screamed. She screamed. She pressed herself up and away from him and ran naked into the sitting room, pawed up the ivory telephone: "Keogh" she cried; "For the love of God, *Keogh!*"

—and back into the bedroom where he lay open-mouthing a grating horrible *uh uh!* while she wrung her hands, tried to take one of his, found it agony-tense and unaware of her. She called him, called him, and once, screamed again.

The buzzer sounded with inexcusable discretion.

"Keogh!" she shouted, and the polite buzzer *shhh'd* her again—the lock, oh the damned lock . . . she picked up her negligée and ran with it in her hand through the dressing room and the sitting room and the hall and the living room and the foyer and flung

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open the door. She pulled Keogh through it before he could turn away from her; she thrust one arm in a sleeve of the garment and shouted at him, "Keogh, please, please, Keogh, what's wrong with him?" and she fled to the bedroom, Keogh sprinting to keep up with her.

Then Keogh, chairman of the board of seven great corporations, board-member of a dozen more, general manager of a quiet family holding company which had, for most of a century, specialized in the ownership of corporate owners, went to the bed and fixed his cool blue gaze on the agonized figure there.

He shook his head slightly.

"You called the wrong man," he snapped, and ran back to the sitting-room, knocking the girl aside as if he had been a machine on tracks. He picked up the phone and said, "Get Rathburn up here. *Now*. Where's Weber? You don't? well, find him and get him here. . . . I don't care. Hire an airplane. *Buy* an airplane."

He slammed down the phone and ran back into the bedroom. He came up behind her and gently lifted the negligée onto her other shoulder, and speaking gently to her all the while, reached round her and tied the ribbon belt. "What happened?"

"N-nothing, he just—"

"Come on, girl—clear out of here. Rathburn's practically outside the door, and I've sent for Weber. If there's a better doctor than Rathburn, it could only be Weber, so you've got to leave it to them. Come!"

"I won't leave him."

"Come!" Keogh rapped; then murmured, looking over her shoulder at the bed, "He wants you to, can't you see? He doesn't want you to see him like this. *Right?*" he demanded, and the face, turned away and half-buried in the pillow shone sweatly; cramp mounded the muscles on the side of the mouth they could just see. Stiffly the head nodded; it was like a shudder. "And . . . shut . . . door . . . tight . . ." he said in a clanging half whisper.

"Come," said Keogh. And again, "Come." He propelled her away; she stumbled. Her face turned yearningly until Keogh, both hands on her, kicked at the door and it swung and the sight of the bed was gone. Keogh leaned back against the door as if the latch were not enough to hold it closed.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?"

"I don't know," he said.

"You do, you do . . . you always know everything . . . why won't you let me stay with him?"

"He doesn't want that."

Overcome, inarticulate, she cried out.

"Maybe," he said into her hair, "he wants to scream too."

She struggled—oh, strong, lithe

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and strong she was. She tried to press past him. He would not budge, so at last, at last she wept.

He held her in his arms again, as he had not done since she used to sit on his lap as a little girl. He held her in his arms and looked blindly toward the unconcerned bright morning, seen soft-focused through the cloud of her hair. And he tried to make it stop, the morning, the sun, and time, but—

—but there is one certain thing only about a human mind, and that is that it acts, moves, works ceaselessly while it lives. The action, motion, labor differ from that of a heart, say or an epithelial cell, in that the latter have functions, and in any circumstance perform their functions. Instead of a function, mind has a duty, that of making of a hairless ape a human being . . . yet as if to prove how trivial a difference there is between mind and muscle, mind must move, to some degree, always change, to some degree, always while it lives, like a stinking sweat gland . . . holding her, Keogh thought about Keogh.

The biography of Keogh is somewhat harder to come by than that of a Wyke. This is not in spite of having spent merely half a lifetime in this moneyed shadow; it is because of it. Keogh was a Wyke in all but blood and breeding: Wyke owned him and all he owned, which was a great deal.

He must have been a child once, a youth; he could remember if he wished but did not care to. Life began for him with the *summa cum laude*, the degrees in both business and law and (so young) the year and a half with Hinnegan and Bache, and then the incredible opening at the International Bank; the impossible asked of him in the Zurich-Plenum affair, and his performance of it, and the shadows which grew between him and his associates over the years, while for him the light grew and grew as to the architecture of his work, until at last he was admitted to Wyke, and was permitted to realize that Wyke *was* Zurich and Plenum, and the International Bank, and Hinnegan and Bache; was indeed his law school and his college and much, so very much more. And finally sixteen—good heavens, it was eighteen years ago, when he became General Manager, and the shadows dark to totally black between him and any other world, while the light, his own huge personal illumination, exposed almost to him alone an industrial-financial complex unprecedented in his country, and virtually unmatched in the world.

But then, the beginning, the *other* beginning, was when Old Sam Wyke called him in so abruptly that morning, when (though General Manager with many a board chairman, all unbeknownst,

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under him in rank) he was still the youngest man in that secluded office.

"Keogh," said old Sam, "this is my kid. Take 'er out. Give 'er anything she wants. Be back here at six." He had then kissed the girl on the crown of her dark straw hat, gone to the door, turned and barked, "You see her show off or brag, Keogh, you fetch her a good one, then and there, hear? I don't care what else she does, but don't you let her wave something she's got at someone that hasn't got it. That's Rule One." He had then breezed out, leaving a silent, startled young mover of mountains locking gazes with an unmoving mouse of an eleven-year-old girl. She had luminous pale skin, blue-black silky-shining hair, and thick level black brows.

The *summa cum laude,* the acceptance at Hinnegan and Bache —all such things, they were beginnings that he knew were beginnings. This he would not know for some time that it was a beginning, any more than he could realize that he had just heard the contemporary version of Cap'n Gamaliel's "Thou shalt not . . . cause covetousness." At the moment, he could only stand nonplused for a moment, then excuse himself and go to the treasurer's office, where he scribbled a receipt and relieved the petty cash box of its by no means petty contents. He got his hat and coat and returned to the President's office. Without a word the child rose and moved with him to the door.

They lunched and spent the afternoon together, and were back at six. He bought her whatever she wanted at one of the most expensive shops in New York. He took her to just the places of amusement she asked him to.

When it was all over he returned the stack of bills to the petty cash box, less the one dollar and twenty cents he had paid out. For at the shop—the largest toy store in the world—she had carefully selected a sponge rubber ball, which they packed for her in a cubical box. This she carried carefully by its string for the rest of the afternoon.

They lunched from a pushcart —he had one hot dog with kraut, she had two with relish.

They rode uptown on the top of a Fifth Avenue double-decker, open-top bus.

They went to the zoo in Central Park and bought one bag of peanuts for the girl and the pigeons, and one bag of buns for the girl and the bears.

Then they took another double-decker back downtown, and that was it; that was the afternoon.

He remembered clearly what she looked like then: like a straw-hatted wren, for all it was a well-brushed wren. He could not remember what they had talked about, if indeed they had talked

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much at all. He was prepared to forget the episode, or at least to put it neatly in the *Trivia: Misc.: Closed* file in his compartmented mind, when, a week later, old Sam tossed him a stack of papers and told him to read them through and come and ask questions if he thought he had to. The only question which came to mind when he had read them was, "Are you sure you want to go through with this?" and that was not the kind of question one asked old Sam. So he thought it over very carefully and came up with "Why me?" and old Sam looked him up and down and growled, "She likes you, that's why."

And so it was that Keogh and the girl lived together in a cotton mill town in the South for a year. Keogh worked in the company store. The girl worked in the mill; twelve-year-old girls worked in cotton mills in the South in those days. She worked the morning shift and half the evening shift, and had three hours' school in the afternoons. Up until 10 o'clock on Saturday nights they watched the dancing from the sidelines. On Sundays they went to the Baptist church. Their name while they were there was Harris. Keogh used to worry frantically when she was out of his sight, but one day when she was crossing the catwalk over the water-circulating sump, a sort of oversized well beside the mill, the catwalk broke and pitched her into the water. Before she could so much as draw a breath a Negro stoker appeared out of nowhere—actually, out of the top of the coal chute—and leapt in and had her and handed her up to the sudden crowd. Keogh came galloping up from the company store as they were pulling the stoker out, and after seeing that the girl was all right, knelt beside the man, whose leg was broken.

"I'm Mr. Harris, her father. You'll get a reward for this. What's your name?"

The man beckoned him close, and as he bent down, the stoker, in spite of his pain, grinned and winked. "You don' owe me a thang, Mr. Keogh," he murmured. In later times, Keogh would be filled with rage at such a confidence, would fire the man out of hand: this first time he was filled with wonder and relief. After that, things were easier on him, as he realized that the child was surrounded by Wyke's special employees, working on Wyke land in a Wyke mill and paying rent in a Wyke row-house.

In due time the year was up. Someone else took over, and the girl, now named Kevin and with a complete new background in case anyone should ask, went off for two years to a very exclusive Swiss finishing school, where she dutifully wrote letters to a Mr. and Mrs. Kevin who held large acreage

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in the Pennsylvania mountains, and who just as dutifully answered her.

Keogh returned to his own work, which he found in apple-pie order, with every one of the year's transactions beautifully abstracted for him, and an extra amount, over and above his astronomical salary, tucked away in one of his accounts—an amount that startled even Keogh. He missed her at first, which he expected. But he missed her every single day for two solid years, a disturbance he could not explain, did not examine, and discussed with no one.

All the Wykes, old Sam once grunted to him, did something of the sort. He, Sam, had been a logger in Oregon and a year and a half as utility man, then ordinary seaman on a coastwise tanker.

Perhaps some deep buried part of Keogh's mind thought that when she returned from Switzerland they would go for catfish in an old flat-bottomed boat again, or that she would sit on his lap while he suffered on the hard benches of the once-a-month picture show. The instant he saw her on her return from Switzerland he knew that would never be. He knew he was entering some new phase; it troubled and distressed him and he put it away in the dark inside himself; he could do that; he was strong enough. And she—well, she flung her arms around him and kissed him; but when she talked with this new vocabulary, this deft school finish, she was strange and awesome to him, like an angel. Even a loving angel is strange and awesome . . .

They were together again then for a long while, but there were no more hugs. He became a Mr. Stark in the Cleveland office of a brokerage house and she boarded with an elderly couple, went to the local high school and had a part-time job filing in his office. This was when she learned the ins and outs of the business, the size of it. It would be hers. It became hers while they were in Cleveland: old Sam died very suddenly. They slipped away to the funeral but were back at work on Monday. They stayed there for another eight months; she had a great deal to learn. In the fall she entered a small private college and Keogh saw nothing of her for a year.

"Shhh," he breathed to her, crying, and *shhh!* said the buzzer.

"The doctor . . ."

"Go take a bath," he said. He pushed her.

She half-turned under his hand, faced him again blazing. "No!"

"You can't go in there, you know," he said, going for the door. She glared at him, but her lower lip trembled.

Keogh opened the door. "In the bedroom."

"Who—" then the doctor saw

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the girl, her hands knotted together, her face twisted, and had his answer. He was a tall man, grey, with quick hands, a quick step, swift words. He went straight through foyer, hall and rooms and into the bedroom. He closed the door behind him. There had been no discussion, no request and refusal; Dr. Rathburn had simply, quickly, quietly shut them out.

"Go take a bath."

"No."

"Come on." He took her wrist and led her to the bathroom. He reached into the shower stall and turned on the side jets. There were four at each corner; the second from the top was scented. Apple blossom. "Go on."

He moved toward the door. She stood where he had let go of her wrist, pulling at her hands. "Go on," he said again. "Just a quick one. Do you good." He waited. "Or do you want me to douse you myself? I bet I still can."

She flashed him a look; indignation passed instantly as she understood what he was trying to do. The rare spark of mischief appeared in her eyes and, in perfect imitation of a mill row redneck, she said, "Y'all try it an Ah'll tall th' shurff Ah ain't rightly yo' chile." But the effort cost her too much and she cried again. He stepped out and softly closed the door.

He was waiting by the bedroom when Rathburn slid out and quickly shut the door on the grunt, the gasp.

"What is it?" asked Keogh.

"Wait a minute." Rathburn strode to the phone. Keogh said, "I sent for Weber."

Rathburn came almost ludicrously to a halt. "Wow," he said. "Not bad diagnosing, for a layman. Is there anything you can't do?"

"I can't understand what you're talking about," said Keogh testily.

"Oh—I thought you knew. Yes, I'm afraid it's in Weber's field. What made you guess?"

Keogh shuddered. "I saw a mill hand take a low blow once. I know *he* wasn't hit. What exactly is it?"

Rathburn darted a look around. "Where is she?" Keogh indicated the bathroom. "I told her to take a shower."

"Good," said the doctor. He lowered his voice. "Naturally I can't tell without further examination and lab—"

"*What is it?*" Keogh demanded, not loud, but with such violence that Rathburn stepped back a pace.

"It could be choriocarcinoma."

Tiredly, Keogh wagged his head. "Me diagnose that? I can't even spell it. What is it?" He caught himself up, as if he had retrieved the word from thin air and run it past him again. "I know what the last part of it means."

"One of the—" Rathburn swal-

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lowed, and tried again. "One of the more vicious forms of cancer. And it . . ." He lowered his voice again. "It doesn't always hit this hard."

"Just how serious is it?"

Rathburn raised his hands and let them fall.

"Bad, eh? Doc—*how bad?*"..

"Maybe some day we can . . ." Rathburn's lowered voice at last disappeared. They hung there, each on the other's pained gaze.

"How much time?"

"Maybe six weeks."

"Six weeks!"

"Shh," said Rathburn nervously.

"Weber—"

"Weber knows more about internal physiology than anybody. But I don't know if that will help. It's a little like . . . your, uh, house is struck by lightning, flattened, burned to the ground. You can examine it and the weather reports and, uh, know exactly what happened. Maybe some day we can . . ." he said again, but he said it so hopelessly that Keogh, through the roiling mists of his own terror, pitied him and half-instinctively put out a hand. He touched the doctor's sleeve and stood awkwardly.

"What are you going to do?"

Rathburn looked at the closed bedroom door. "What I did." He made a gesture with a thumb an two fingers. "Morphine."

"And that's all?"

"Look, I'm a G.P. Ask Weber, will you?"

Keogh realized that he had pushed the man as far as he could in his search for a crumb of hope; if there was none, there was no point in trying to squeeze it out. He asked, "Is there anyone working on it? Anything new? Can you find out?"

"Oh, I will, I will. But Weber can tell you off the top of his head more than I could find out in six mon . . . in a long time."

A door opened. She came out, hollow-eyed, but pink and glowing in a long white terry-cloth robe. "Dr. Rathburn—"

"He's asleep."

"Thank God. Does it—"

"There's no pain."

"What is it? What happened to him?"

"Well, I wouldn't like to say for sure . . . we're waiting for Dr. Weber. He'll know."

"But—but is he—"

"He'll sleep the clock around."

"Can I . . ." The timidity, the caution, Keogh realized, was so unlike her. "Can I see him?"

"He's fast asleep!"

"I don't care. I'll be quiet. I won't—touch him or anything."

"Go ahead," said Rathburn. She opened the bedroom door and eagerly, silently slipped inside.

"You'd think she was trying to make sure he was there."

Keogh, who knew her so very well, said, "She is."

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But a biography of Guy Gibbon is *really* hard to come by. For he was no exceptional executive, who for all his guarded anonymity wielded so much power that he must be traceable by those who knew where to look and what to look for, and cared enough to process detail like a mass spectroscope. Neither was Guy Gibbon born heir to countless millions, the direct successor to a procession of giants.

He came from wherever it is most of us come from, the middle or the upper-middle, or the upper-lower middle or the lower-upper middle, or some other indefinable speck in the midrange of the interflowing striations of society (the more they are studied, the less they mean). He belonged to the Wykes entity for only eight and a half weeks, after all. Oh, the bare details might not be too hard to come by—(birth date, school record,) and certain main facts—(father's occupation, mother's maiden name)—as well, perhaps, as a highlight or two—(divorce, perhaps, or a death in the family); but a biography, a real biography, which does more than describe, which *explains* the man—and few do—now, *this* is an undertaking.

Science, it is fair to assume, can do what all the king's horses and all the king's men could not do, and totally restore a smashed egg. Given equipment enough, and time enough . . . but isn't this a way of saying, "given money enough"? For money can be not only means, but motive. So if enough money went into the project, perhaps the last unknown, the last vestige of, anonymity could be removed from a man's life story, even a young man from (as the snobs say) nowhere, no matter how briefly—though intimately—known.

The most important thing, obviously, that ever happened to Guy Gibbon in his life was his first encounter with the Wyke entity, and like many a person before and since, he had not the faintest idea he had done so. It was when he was in his late teens, and he and Sammy Stein went trespassing.

Sammy was a school sidekick, and this particular day he had a secret; he had been very insistent on the day's outing, but refused to say why. He was a burly-shouldered, good-natured, reasonably chinless boy whose close friendship with Guy was based almost exclusively on the attraction of opposite poles. And since, of the many kinds of fun they had had, the most fun was going trespassing, he wanted it that way on this particular occasion.

"Going trespassing," as an amusement, had more or less invented itself when they were in their early teens. They lived in a large city surrounded (unlike many today) by old suburbs, not

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new ones. These included large—some, more than large—estates and mansions, and it was their greatest delight to slip through a fence or over a wall and, profoundly impressed by their own bravery, slip through field and forest, lawn and drive, like Indian scouts in settler country. Twice they had been caught, once to have dogs set on them—three boxers and two mastiffs, which certainly would have torn them to very small pieces if the boys had not been more lucky than swift—and once by a dear little old lady who swamped them sickeningly with jelly sandwiches and lonely affection. But over the saga of their adventures, their two captures served to spice the adventure; two failures out of a hundred successes (for many of these places were visited frequently) was a proud record.

So they took a trolley to the end of the line, and walked a mile, and went straight ahead where the road turned at a discreet *No Admittance* sign of expensive manufacture and a high degree of weathering. They proceeded through a small wild wood, and came at last to an apparently unscalable granite wall.

Sammy had discovered this wall the week before, roaming alone; he had waited for Guy to accompany him before challenging it, and Guy was touched. He was also profoundly excited by the wall itself. Anything this size should have been found, conjectured about, campaigned against, battled and conquered long since. But as well as being a high wall, a long wall, and mysterious, it was a distant wall, a discreet wall. No road touched it but its own driveway, which was primitive, meandering, and led to ironbound, solid oak gates without a chink or crack to peek through.

They could not climb it nor breach it—but they crossed it. An ancient maple on this side held hands with a chestnut over the crown of the wall, and they went over like a couple of squirrels.

They had, in their ghost-like way, haunted many an elaborate property, but never had they seen such maintenance, such manicure, such polish of a piece of land and, as Sammy said, awed out of his usual brashness, as they stood in a solid marble pergola overlooking green plush acres of rolling lawn, copses of carven boxwood, park-like woods and steams with little Japanese bridges and, in their bends, humorful little rock-gardens: "—and there's goddam *miles* of it."

They had wandered a bit, that first time, and had learned that there were after all some people there. They saw a tractor far away, pulling a slanted gang of mowers across one of the green-plush fields. (The owners doubtless called it a lawn; it was a

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field.) The machines, rare in that time, cut a swath all of thirty feet wide "and that," Sammy said, convulsing them, "ain't hay." And then they had seen the house—

Well, a glimpse. Breaking out of the woods, Guy had felt himself snatched back. "House up there," said Sammy. "Someone'll see us." There was a confused impression of a white hill that was itself the house, or part of it; towers, turrets, castellations, crenellations; a fairy-tale palace set in this legendary landscape. They had not been able to see it again; it was so placed that it could be approached nowhere secretly nor even spied upon. They were struck literally speechless by the sight and for most of an hour had nothing to say, and that expressible only by wags of the head. Ultimately they referred to it as "the shack," and it was in this vein that they later called their final discovery "the ol' swimmin' hole."

It was across a creek and over a wooded hill. Two more hills rose to meet the wood, and cupped between the three was a pond, perhaps a lake. It was roughly L-shaped, and all around it were shadowed inlets, grottoes, inconspicuous stone steps leading here to a rustic pavilion set about with flowers, there to a concealed forest glade harboring a tiny formal garden.

But the lake, the ol' swimmin' hole . . .

They went swimming, splashing as little as possible and sticking to the shore. They explored two inlets to the right (a miniature waterfall and a tiny beach of obviously imported golden sand) and three to the left (a square cut one, lined with tile the color of patina, with a black glass diving tower overhanging water that must have been dredged to twenty feet; a little beach of snow-white sand; and one they dared not enter, for fear of harming the fleet of perfect sailing ships, none more than a foot long, which lay at anchor; but they trod water until they were bone-cold, gawking at the miniature model waterfront with little pushcarts in the street, and lamp-posts, and old-fashioned houses) and then, weary, hungry and awestruck, they had gone home.

And Sammy cracked the secret he had been keeping—the thing which he felt made this day an occasion: he was to go wild-hairing off the next day in an effort to join Chennault in China.

Guy Gibbon, overwhelmed, made the only gesture he could think of: he devotedly swore he would not go trespassing again until Sammy got back.

"Death from choriocarcinoma," Dr. Weber began, "is the result of —"

"But he won't die," she said. "I won't let him."

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"My dear," Dr. Weber was a small man with round shoulders and a hawk's face. "I don't mean to be unkind, but I can use all the euphemisms and kindle all the false hope, or I can do as you have asked me to do—explain the condition and make a prognosis. I can't do both."

Dr. Rathburn said gently, "Why don't you go and lie down? I'll come when we've finished here and tell you all about it."

"I don't want to lie down," she said fiercely. "And I wasn't asking you to spare me anything, Dr. Weber. I simply said I would not let him die. There's nothing in that statement which keeps you from telling me the truth."

Keogh smiled, Weber caught him at it and was startled; Keogh saw his surprise. "I know her better than you do," he said, with a touch of pride. "You don't have to pull any punches."

"Thanks, Keogh," she said. She leaned forward. "Go ahead, Dr. Weber."

Weber looked at her. Snatched from his work two thousand miles away, brought to a place he had never known existed, of a magnificence which attacked his confidence in his own eyes, meeting a woman of power—every sort of power—quite beyond his experience . . . Weber had thought himself beyond astonishment. Shock, grief, fear, deprivation like hers he had seen before, of course; what doctor has not? but when Keogh had told her baldly that this disease killed in six weeks, *always*, she had flinched, closed her eyes for an interminable moment, and had then said softly, "Tell us everything you can about this—this disease, Doctor." And she had added, for the first time, "He isn't going to die. I won't let him;" and the way she held her head, the way her full voice handled the words, he almost believed her. Heaven knows, he wished he could. And so he found he could be astonished yet again.

He made an effort to detach himself, and became not a man, not this particular patient's doctor, but a sort of source-book. He began again:

"Death from choriocarcinoma is a little unlike other deaths from malignancies. Ordinarily a cancer begins locally, and sends its chains and masses of wild cells growing through the organ on which it began. Death can result from the failure of that organ; liver, kidney, brain, what have you. Or the cancer suddenly breaks up and spreads through the body, starting colonies throughout the system. This is called metastasis. Death results then from the loss of efficiency of many organs instead of just one. Of course, both these things can happen—the almost complete impairment of the originally cancerous organ, and metastatic effects at the same time.

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"Chorio, on the other hand, doesn't originally involve a vital organ. Vital to the species, perhaps, but not to the individual." He permitted himself a dry smile. "This is probably a startling concept to most people in this day and age, but it's nonetheless true. However, sex cells, at their most basic and primitive, have peculiarities not shared by other body cells.

"Have you ever heard of the condition known as ectopic pregnancy?" He directed his question at Keogh, who nodded. "A fertilized ovum fails to descend to the uterus; instead it attaches itself to the side of the very fine tube between the ovaries and the womb. And at first everything proceeds well with it—and this is the point I want you to grasp—because in spite of the fact that only the uterus is truly specialized for this work, the tube wall not only supports the growing ovum but feeds it. It actually forms what we call a counterplacenta; it enfolds the early foetus and nurtures it. The foetus, of course, has a high survival value, and is able to get along quite well on the plasma which the counterplacenta supplies it with. And it grows—it grows fantastically. Since the tube is very fine—you'd have difficulty getting the smallest sewing needle up through it—it can no longer contain the growing foetus, and ruptures. Unless it is removed at that time, the tissues outside will quite as readily take on the work of a real placenta and uterus, and in six or seven months, if the mother survives that long, will create havoc in the abdomen.

"All right then: back to chorio. Since the cells involved are sex cells, and cancerous to boot, they divide and redivide wildly, without pattern or special form. They develop in an infinite variety of shapes and sizes and forms. The law of averages dictates that a certain number of these—and the number of distorted cells is astronomical—resemble fertilized ova. Some of them resemble them so closely that I personally would not enjoy the task of distinguishing between them and the real thing. However, the body as a whole is not that particular; anything which even roughly resembles a fertilized egg-cell is capable of commanding that counter-placenta.

"Now consider the source of these cells—physiologically speaking, gland tissue—a mass of capillary tubes and blood vessels. Each and every one of these does its best to accept and nurture these fetal imitations, down to the tiniest of them. The thin walls of the capillaries, however, break down easily under such an effort, and the imitations—selectively, the best of them, too, because the tissues yield most readily to them—they pass into the capillaries and then into the bloodstream.

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"There is one place and only one place where they can be combed out; and it's a place rich in oxygen, lymph, blood and plasma: the lungs. The lungs enthusiastically take on the job of forming placentae for these cells, and nurturing them. But for every segment of lung given over to gestating an imitation fetus, there is one less segment occupied with the job of oxygenating blood. Ultimately the lungs fail, and death results from oxygen starvation."

Rathburn spoke up: "For years chorio was regarded as a lung disease, and the cancerous gonads as a sort of side effect."

"But lung cancer—" Keogh began to object.

"It isn't lung cancer, don't you see? Given enough time, it might be, through metastasis. But there is never enough time. Chorio doesn't have to wait for that, to kill. That's why it's so swift." He tried not to look at the girl, and failed; he said it anyway: "And certain."

"Just exactly how do you treat it?"

Weber raised his hands and let them fall. It was precisely the gesture Rathburn had made earlier, and Keogh wondered distantly whether they taught it in medical schools. "Something to kill the pain. Orchidectomy might make the patient last a little longer, by removing the supply of wild cells to the bloodstream. But it wouldn't save him. Metastasis has already taken place by the time the first symptom appears. The cancer becomes generalized . . . perhaps the lung condition is only God's mercy."

"What's 'orchidectomy'?" asked Keogh.

"Amputation of the—uh—source," said Rathburn uncomfortably.

"No!" cried the girl.

Keogh sent her a pitying look. There was that about him which was cynical, sophisticated, and perhaps coldly angry at anyone who lived as he could never live, had what he could never have. It was a stirring of the grave ancient sin which old Cap'n Gamaliel had isolated in his perspicacious thoughts. Sure, amputate, if it'll help, he thought. What do you think you're preserving—his virility? What good's it to you now? . . . but sending her the look, he encountered something different from the romantically-based horror and shock he expected. Her thick level brows were drawn together, her whole face intense with taut concentration. "Let me think," she said, oddly.

"You really should—" Rathburn began, but she shushed him with an impatient gesture. The three men exchanged a glance and settled back; it was as if someone, something had told them clearly and specifically to wait. What they were waiting for, they could not imagine.

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The girl sat with her eyes closed. A minute crawled by. "Daddy used to say," she said, so quietly that she must surely be talking to herself, "that there's always a way. All you have to do is think of it."

There was another long silence, and she opened her eyes. There was a burning down in them somewhere; it made Keogh uneasy. She said, "And once he told me that I could have anything I wanted; all it had to be was . . . possible. And . . . the only way you can find out if a thing is impossible is to try it."

"That wasn't Sam Wyke," said Keogh. "That was Keogh."

She wet her lips and looked at them each in turn. She seemed not to see them at all. "I'm not going to let him die," she said. "You'll see."

Sammy Stein came back two years later, on leave, and full of plans to join the Army Air Force. He'd had, as he himself said, the hell kicked out of him in China and a lot of the hellishness as well. But there was enough of the old Sammy left to make wild wonderful plans about going trespassing; and they knew just where they were going. The new Sammy, however, demanded a binge and a broad first.

Guy, two years out of high school, working for a living, and by nature neither binger nor wencher, went along only too gladly. Sam seemed to have forgotten about the 'ol' swimmin' hole' at first, and halfway through the evening, in a local bar-and-dance emporium, Guy was about to despair of his ever remembering it, when Sam himself brought it up, recalling to Guy that he had once written Sam a letter asking Sam if it had really happened. Guy had, in his turn, forgotten the letter, and after that they had a good time with "remember-when" —and they made plans to go trespassing the very next day, and bring a lunch. And start early.

Then there was a noisy involvement with some girls, and a lot more drinks, and out of the haze and movement somewhere after midnight, Guy emerged on a sidewalk looking at Sammy shovelling a girl into a taxicab. "Hey!" he called out, "what about the you know, ol' swimmin' hole?"

"Call me Abacus, you can count on me," said Sammy, and laughed immoderately. The girl with him pulled at his arm; he shook her off and weaved over to Guy. "Listen," he said, and gave a distorted wink, "if this makes—and it will—I'm starting no early starts. Tell you what, you go on out there and meet me by that sign says keep out or we'll castigate you. Say eleven o'clock. If I can't make it by then I'm dead or something." He bellowed at the cab, "You gon' kill me, honey?" and the girl called

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back, "I will if you don't get into this taxi." "See what I mean?" said Sammy in a grand drunken nonsequitor, "I got to go get killed." He zigged away, needing no zag because even walking sidewise he reached the cab in a straight line, and Guy saw no more of him that leave.

That was hard to take, mostly because there was no special moment at which he knew Sammy wasn't coming. He arrived ten minutes late, after making a superhuman effort to get there. His stomach was sour from the unaccustomed drinking and he was sandy-eyed and ache-jointed from lack of sleep. He knew that the greater probability was that Sammy had not arrived yet or would not at all; yet the nagging possibility existed that he had come early and gone straight in. Guy waited around for a full hour, a some more minutes until the little road was clear of traffic and sounds of traffic, and then plunged alone into the woods, past the No Trespassing sign, and in to the wall. He had trouble finding the two trees, and once over the wall, he could not get his bearings for a while; he was pleased, of course, to find the unbelievably perfect lawns still there by the flawless acre, the rigidly controlled museums of carven box, the edge-trimmed, rolled-gravel walks meandering prettily through the woods. The pleasure, however, was no more than confirmation of his memory, and went no further; the day was spoiled.

Guy reached the lake at nearly one o'clock, hot, tired, ravenously hungry and unpleasantly nervous. The combination hit him in the stomach and made it echo; he sat down on the bank and ate. He wolfed down the food he had brought for himself and Sammy's as well—odds and ends carelessly tossed into a paper sack in the bleary early hours. The cake was moldy but he ate it anyway. The orange juice was warm and had begun to ferment. And stubbornly, he determined to swim, because that was what he had come for.

He chose the beach with the golden sand. Under a thick cover of junipers he found a stone bench and table. He undressed here and scuttled across the beach and into the water.

He had meant it to be a mere dip, so he could say he'd done it. But around the little headland to the left was the rectangular cove with the diving platform; and he remembered the harbor of model ships; and then movement diagonally across the foot of the lake's L caught his eye, and he saw models —not the anchored ships this time, but racing sloops, which put out from an inlet and crossed its mouth and sailed in again; they must be mounted on some sort of underwater wheel or endless chain, and

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moved as the breeze took them. He all but boiled straight across to them, then decided to be wise and go round.

He swam to the left and the rocky shire, and worked his way along it. Clinging close (the water seemed bottomless here) he rounded the point and came face to face (literally; they touched) with a girl.

She was young—near his age—and his first impression was of eyes of too complex an architecture, blue-white teeth with pointed canines quite unlike the piano-key regularity considered beautiful in these times, and a wide cape of rich brown hair afloat around her shoulders. By then his gasp was completed, and in view of the fact that in gasping he had neglected to remove his mouth from the water, he was shut off from outside impressions for a strangling time, until he felt a firm grasp on his left biceps and found himself returned to the side of the rock.

"Th-thanks," he said hoarsely as she swam back a yard and trod water. "I'm not supposed to be here," he added inanely.

"I guess I'm not either. But I thought you lived here. I thought you were a faun."

"Boy am I glad to hear that. I mean about you. All I am is a trespasser. Boy."

"I'm not a boy."

"It was just a finger of speech," he said, using one of the silly expressions which come to a person as he grows, and blessedly pass. She seemed not to react to it at all, for she said gravely, "You have the most beautiful eyes I have ever seen. They are made of aluminum. And your hair is all wiggly."

He could think of nothing to say to that, but tried; all that emerged was, "Well, it's early yet," and suddenly they were laughing together. She was so strange, so different. She spoke in a grave, unaccented and utterly incautious idiom as if she thought strange thoughts and spoke them right out. "Also," she said, "You have lovely lips. They're pale blue. You ought to get out of the water."

"I can't!"

She considered that for a moment, treading away from him and then back to the yard's distance. "Where are your things?"

He pointed across the narrow neck of the lake which he had circumnavigated.

"Wait for me over there," she said, and suddenly swam close, so close she could dip her chin and look straight into his eyes. "You got to," she said fiercely.

"Oh I will," he promised, and struck out for the opposite shore. She hung to the rock, watching him.

Swimming, reaching hard, stretching for distance warmed

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him, and the chill and its accompanying vague ache diminished. Then he had a twinge of stomachache, and he drew up his knees to ease it. When he tried to extend himself again, he could, but it hurt too much. He drew up his knees again, and the pain followed inward so that to flex again was out of the question. He drew his knees up still tighter, and tighter still followed the pain. He needed air badly by then, threw up his head, tried to roll over on his back; but with his knees drawn up, everything came out all wrong. He inhaled at last because he had to, but the air was gone away somewhere; he floundered upward for it until the pressure in his ears told him he was swimming downward. Blackness came upon him and receded, and came again, he let it come for a tired instant, and was surrounded by light, and drew one lungful of air and one of water, and got the blackness again; this time it stayed with him . . .

Still beautiful in her bed, but morphine-clouded, flypapered and unstruggling in viscous sleep, he lay with monsters swarming in his veins . . .

Quietly, in a corner of the room, she spoke with Keogh:

"You don't understand me. You didn't understand me yesterday when I cried out at the idea of that—that operation. Keogh, I love him, but I'm *me*. Loving him doesn't mean I've stopped thinking. Loving him means I'm more me than ever, not less. It means I can do anything I did before, only more, only better. That's why I fell in love with him. That's why I am in love with him. Weren't you ever in love, Keogh?"

He looked at the way her hair fell, and the earnest placement of her thick soft brows, and he said, "I haven't thought much about it."

" 'There's always a way. All you have to do is think of it,' " she quoted. "Keogh, I've accepted what Dr. Rathburn said. After I left you yesterday I went to the library and tore the heart out of some books . . . they're right, Rathburn and Weber. And I've thought and I've thought . . . trying the way Daddy would, to turn everything upside down and backwards, to look for a new way of thinking. He won't die, Keogh; I'm not going to let him die."

"You said you accepted—"

"Oh, part of him. Most of him, if you like. We all die, bit by bit, all the time, and it doesn't bother us because most of the dead parts are replaced. He'll . . . he'll lose more parts, sooner, but—after it's over, he'll be himself again." She said it with superb confidence—perhaps it was childlike. If so, it was definitely not childish.

"You have an idea," said Keogh positively. As he had pointed out to the doctors, he knew her.

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"All those—those things in his blood," she said quietly. "The struggle they go through . . . they're trying to survive; did you ever think of it that way, Keogh? They want to live. They want most terribly to go on living."

"I hadn't thought about it."

"His body wants them to live too. It welcomes them wherever they lodge. Dr. Weber said so."

"You've got hold of something," said Keogh flatly, "and whatever it is I don't think I like it."

"I don't want you to like it," she said in the same strange quiet voice. He looked swiftly at her and saw again the burning deep in her eyes. He had to look away. She said, "I want you to hate it. I want you to fight it. You have one of the most wonderful minds I have ever known, Keogh, and I want you to think up every argument you can think of against it. For every argument I'll find an answer, and then we'll know what to do."

"You'd better go ahead," he said reluctantly.

"I had a pretty bad quarrel with Dr. Weber this morning," she said suddenly.

"This m—when?" He looked at his watch; it was still early.

"About three, maybe four. In his room. I went there and woke him up."

"Look, you don't do things like that to Weber!"

"I do. Anyway, he's gone."

He rose to his feet, the rare bright patches of anger showing in his cheeks. He took a breath, let it out, and sat down again. "You'd better tell me about it."

"In the library," she said, "there's a book on genetics, and it mentions some experiments on Belgian hares. The does were impregnated without sperm, with some sort of saline or alkaline solution."

"I remember something about it." He was well used to her circuitous way of approaching something important. She built conversational points, not like a hired contractor, but like an architect. Sometimes she brought in portions of her lumber and stacked them beside the structure. If she ever did that, it was material she needed and would use. He waited.

"The does gave birth to baby rabbits, all female. The interesting thing was that they were identical to each other and to the mother. Even the blood-vessel patterns in the eyeball were so similar that an expert might be fooled by photographs of them. 'Impossibly similar' is what one of the experimenters called it. They had to be identical because everything they inherited was from the mother. I woke Dr. Weber up to tell him about that."

"And he told you he'd read the book."

"He wrote it," she said gently. "And then I told him that if he

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could do that with a Belgian hare, he could do it with—" she nodded toward her big bed—"him."

Then she was quiet, while Keogh rejected the idea, found it stuck to his mind's hand, not to be shaken off; brought it to his mind's eye and shuddered away from it, shook again and failed, slowly brought it close and turned it over, and turned it again.

"Take one of those—those things like fertilized ova—make it grow. . . ."

"You don't *make* it grow. It wants desperately to grow. And not one of them, Keogh. You have thousands. You have hundreds more every hour."

"Oh my God."

"It came to me when Dr. Rathburn suggested the operation. It came to me all at once, a miracle. If you love someone that much," she said, looking at the sleeper, "miracles happen. But you have to be willing to help them happen." She looked at him directly, with an intensity that made him move back in his chair. "I can have anything I want—all it has to be is possible. We just have to make it possible. That's why I went to Dr. Weber this morning. To ask him."

"He said it wasn't possible."

"He said that at first. After a half hour or so he said the odds against it were in the billions or trillions . . . but you see, as soon as he said that, he was saying it was possible."

"What did you do then?"

"I dared him to try."

"And that's why he left?"

"Yes."

"You're mad," he said before he could stop himself. She seemed not to resent it. She sat calmly, waiting.

"Look," said Keogh at last, "Weber said those distorted—uh, —*things* were *like* fertilized ova. He never said they were. He could have said—well, I'll say it for him —they're *not* fertilized ova."

"But he did say they were—some of them, anyway, and especially those that reached the lungs —were very much like ova. How close do you have to get before there's no real difference at all?"

"It can't be. It just can't."

"Weber said that. And I asked him if he had ever tried."

"All right, all right! It can't happen, but just to keep this silly argument going, suppose you got something that would grow. You won't, of course. But if you did, how would you keep it growing. It has to be fed, it has to be kept at a certain critical temperature, a certain amount of acid or alkali will kill it . . . you don't just plant something like that in the yard."

"Already they've taken ova from one cow, planted them in another, and gotten calves. There's a man in Australia who plans to raise blooded cattle from scrub cows that way."

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"You *have* done your homework."

"Oh, that isn't all. There's a Dr. Carrel in New Jersey who has been able to keep chicken tissue alive for months—he says indefinitely—in a nutrient solution, in a temperature-controlled jar in his lab. It grows, Keogh! It grows so much he has to cut it away every once in a while."

"This is crazy. This is—it's insane," he growled. "And what do you think you'll get if you bring one of these monsters to term?"

"We'll bring thousands of them to term," she said composedly. "And one of them will be—*him.*" She leaned forward abruptly, and her even tone of voice broke; a wildness grew through her face and voice, and though it was quiet, it shattered him: "It will be his flesh, the pattern of him, his own substance grown again. His hair, Keogh. His fingerprints. His—eyes. His—his *self.*"

"I can't—" Keogh shook himself like a wet spaniel, but it changed nothing; he was still here, she, the bed, the sleeper, and this dreadful, this inconceivably horrible, wrong idea.

She smiled then, put out her hand and touched him; incredibly, it was a mother's smile, warm and comforting, a mother's loving protective touch; her voice was full of affection. "Keogh, if it won't work, it won't work, no matter what we do. Then you'll be right. I think it will work. It's what I want. Don't you want me to have what I want?"

He had to smile, and she smiled back. "You're a young devil," he said ardently. "Got me coming and going, haven't you? Why did you want me to fight it?"

"I didn't," she said, "but if you fight me you'll come up with problems nobody else could possibly think of, and once we've thought of them, we'll be ready, don't you see? I'll fight with you, Keogh," she said, shifting her strange bright spectrum from tenderness to a quiet, convinced, invincible certainty, "I'll fight with you, I'll lift and carry, I'll buy and sell and kill if I have to, but I am going to bring him back. You know something, Keogh?"

"What?"

She waved her hand in a gesture that included him, the room, the castle and grounds and all the other castles and grounds; the pseudonyms, the ships and trains, the factories and exchanges, the mountains and acres and mines and banks and the thousands upon thousands of people which, taken together, were Wyke: "I always knew that all this *was,*" she said, "and I've come to understand that this is mine. But I used to wonder, sometimes, what it was all *for.* Now I know. Now I know."

A mouth on his mouth, a weight on his stomach. He felt boneless

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and nauseated, limp as grease drooling. The light around him was green, and all shapes blurred.

The mouth on his mouth, the weight on his stomach, a breath of air, welcome but too warm, too moist. He needed it desperately but did not like it, and found a power-plant full of energy to gather it up in his lungs and fling it away; but his weakness so filtered all that effort that it emerged in a faint bubbling sigh.

The mouth on his mouth again, and the weight on his stomach, and another breath. He tried to turn his head but someone held him by the nose. He blew out the needed, unsatisfactory air and replaced it by a little gust of his own inhalation. On this he coughed; it was too rich, pure, too good. He coughed as one does over a pickle-barrel; good air hurt his lungs.

He felt his head and shoulders lifted, shifted, by which he learned that he had been flat on his back on stone, or something flat and quite that hard, and was now on smooth firm softness. The good sharp air came and went, his weak coughs fewer, until he fell into a dazed peace. The face that bent over his was too close to focus, or he had lost the power to focus; either way, he didn't care. Drowsily he stared up into the blurred brightness of that face and listened uncritically to the voice —

—the voice crooning wordlessly and comfortingly, and somehow, in its wordlessness, creating new expressions for joy and delight for which words would not do. Then after all there were words, half sung, half whispered; and he couldn't catch them, and he couldn't catch them and then . . . and then he was sure he heard: "How could it be, such a magic as that: all this and the eyes as well . . ." Then, demanding, "You are the shape of the not-you: tell me, are *you* in there?"

He opened his eyes wide and saw her face clearly at last and the dark hair, and the eyes were green—true deep sea-green. Her tangled hair, drying, crowned her like vines, and the leafy roof close above seemed part of her and the green eyes, and threw green light on the unaccountably blonde transparency of her cheeks. He genuinely did not know, at the moment, what she was. She had said to him (was it years ago?) I thought you were a faun . . ." he had not, at the moment, much consciousness, not to say whimsy, at his command; she was simply something unrelated to anything in his experience.

He was aware of griping, twisting pain rising, filling, about to explode in his upper abdomen. Some thick wire within him had kinked, and knowing well that it should be unbent, he made a furious, rebellious effort and pulled it

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through. The explosion came, but in nausea, not in agony. Convulsively he turned his head, surged upward, and let it go.

He saw with too much misery to be horrified the bright vomit surging on and around her knee, and running into the crevice between thigh and calf where she had her leg bent and tucked under her, and the clots left there as the fluid ran away. And she—

She sat where she was, held his head, cradled him in her arms, soothed him and crooned to him and said that was good, good; he'd feel better now. The weakness floored him and receded; then shakily he pressed away from her, sat up, bowed his head and gasped for breath. "Whooo," he said.

"Boy," she said; and she said it in exact concert with him. He clung to his shins and wiped the nausea-tears from his left eye, then his right, on his knee-cap. "Boy oh boy," he said, and she said it with him in concert.

So at last he looked at her.

He looked at her, and would never forget what he saw, and exactly the way it was. Late sunlight made into lace by the bower above clothed her; she leaned toward him, one small hand flat on the ground, one slim supporting arm straight and straight down; her weight turned up that shoulder and her head tilted toward it as if drawn down by the heavy darkness of her hair. It gave a sense of yielding, as if she were fragile, which he knew she was not. Her other hand lay open across one knee, the palm up and the fingers not quite relaxed, as if they held something; and indeed they did, for a spot of light, gold turned coral by her flesh, lay in her palm. She held it just so, just right, unconsciously, and her hand held that rare knowledge that closed, a hand may not give nor receive. For his lifetime he had it all, each tiniest part, even to the gleaming big toenail at the underside of her other calf. And she was smiling, and her complex eyes adored.

Guy Gibbon knew his life's biggest moment during the moment itself, a rarity in itself, and of all times of life, it was time to say the unforgettable, for anything he said now would be.

He shuddered, and then smiled back at her. "Oh . . . *boy,*" he breathed.

And again they were laughing together until, puzzled, he stopped and asked, "Where am I?"

She would not answer, so he closed his eyes and puzzled it out. Pine bower . . . undress somewhere . . . swimming. Oh, swimming. And then across the lake, and he had met— He opened his eyes and looked at her and said, "you." Then swimming back, cold, his gut full of too much food and warm juice and moldy cake to boot, and, ". . . you must have saved my life."

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"Well somebody had to. You were dead."

"I should've been."

"No!" she cried. "Don't you ever say that again!" And he could see she was absolutely serious.

"I only meant, for stupidity. I ate a lot of junk, and some cake I think was moldy. Too much, when I was hot and tired, and then like a bonehead I went right into the water, so anybody who does that deserves to—"

"I meant it," she said levelly, "never again. Didn't you ever hear of the old tradition of the field of battle, when one man saved another's life, that life became his to do what he wanted with?"

"What do you want to do with mine?"

"That depends," she said thoughtfully. "You have to give it. I can't just take it." She knelt then and sat back on her heels, her hands trailing pine-needles across the bower's paved stone floor. She bowed her head and her hair swung forward. He thought she was watching him through it; he could not be sure.

He said, and the thought grew so large that it quelled his voice and made him whisper. "Do you want it?"

"Oh, yes," she said, whispering too. When he moved to her and put her hair back to see if she was watching him, he found her eyes closed, and tears pressed through. He reached for her gently, but before he could touch her she sprang up and straight at the leafy wall. Her long golden body passed through it without a sound, and seemed to hang suspended outside; then it was gone. He put his head through and saw her flashing along under green water. He hesitated, then got an acrid whiff of his own vomit. The water looked clean and the golden sand just what he ached to scrub himself with. He climbed out of the bower and floundered clumsily down the bank and into the water.

After his first plunge he came up and spun about, looking for her, but she was gone.

Numbly he swam to the tiny beach and, kneeling, scoured himself with the fine sand. He dove and rinsed, and then (hoping) scrubbed himself all over again. And rinsed. But he did not see her.

He stood in the late rays of the sun to dry, and looked off across the lake. His heart leapt when he saw white movement, and sank again as he saw it was just the wheel of boats bobbing and sliding there.

He plodded up to the bower—now at last he saw it was the one behind which he had undressed—and he sank down on the bench.

This was a place where tropical fish swam in ocean water where there was no ocean, and where fleets of tiny perfect boats sailed with no one sailing them and no one watching, and where priceless

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statues stood hidden in clipped and barbered glades deep in the woods and—and he hadn't seen it all; what other impossibilities were possible in this impossible place?

And besides, he'd been sick. (He wrinkled his nostrils.) Damn near . . . drowned. Out of his head for sure, for a while anyway. She couldn't be real. Hadn't he noticed a greenish cast to her flesh, or was that just the light? . . . anybody who could make a place like this, run a place like this, could jimmy up some kind of machine to hypnotize you like in the science fiction stories.

He stirred uneasily. Maybe someone was watching him, even now.

Hurriedly, he began to dress.

So she wasn't real. Or maybe all of it wasn't real. He'd bumped into that other trespasser across the lake there, and that was real, but then when he'd almost drowned, he'd dreamed up the rest.

Only—he touched his mouth. He'd dreamed up someone blowing the breath back into him. He'd heard about that somewhere, but it sure wasn't what they were teaching this year at the Y.

You are the shape of the not-you. Are you in there?

What did that mean?

He finished dressing dazedly. He muttered, "What'd I hafta go an' eat that goddam cake for?" He wondered what he would tell Sammy. If she wasn't real, Sammy wouldn't know what he was talking about. If she was real there's only one thing he would talk about, yes, and from then on. You mean you had her in that place and all you did was throw up on her? No—he wouldn't tell Sammy. Or anybody.

And he'd be a bachelor all his life.

Boy oh boy. What an introduction. First she has to save your life and then you don't know what to say and then oh, look what you had to go and do. But anyway—she wasn't real.

He wondered what her name was. Even if she wasn't real. Lots of people don't use their real names.

He climbed out of the bower and crossed the silent pine carpet behind it, and he shouted. It was not a word at all, and had nothing about it that tried to make it one.

She was standing there waiting for him. She wore a quiet brown dress and low heels and carried a brown leather pocketbook, and her hair was braided and tied neatly and sedately in a coronet. She looked, too, as if she had turned down some inward tone control so that her skin did not radiate. She looked ready to disappear, not into thin air, but into a crowd—any crowd, as soon as she could get close to one. In a crowd he would have walked right past her, cer-

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tainly, but for the shape of her eyes. She stepped up to him quickly and laid her hand on his cheek and laughed up at him. Again he saw the whiteness of those unusual eyeteeth, so sharp . . . "You're blushing!" she said.

No blusher in history was ever stopped by that observation. He asked, "Which way do you go?"

She looked at his eyes, one, the other, both, quickly; then folded her long hands together around the strap of her pocketbook and looked down at them.

"With you," she said softly.

This was only one of the many things she said to him, moment by moment, which gained meaning for him as time went on. He took her back to town and to dinner, and then to the West side address she gave him and they stood outside it all night talking. In six weeks they were married.

"How could I argue?" said Weber to Dr. Rathburn.

They stood together watching a small army of workmen swarming over the gigantic stone barn a quarter-mile from the castle, which, incidentally, was invisible from this point and unknown to the men. Work had begun at three the previous afternoon, continued all night. There was nothing, nothing at all that Dr. Weber had specified which was not only given him, but on the site or already installed.

"I know," said Rathburn, who did.

"Not only, how could I argue," said Weber, "Why should I? A man has plans, ambitions. That Keogh, what an approach! That's the first thing he went after—my plans for myself. That's where he starts. And suddenly everything you ever wanted to do or be or have is handed to you or promised to you, and no fooling about the promise either."

"*Oh* no. They don't need to fool anybody. . . . You want to pass a prognosis?"

"You mean on the youngster there?" He looked at Rathburn. "Oh—that's not what you mean. . . . You're asking me if I can bring one of those surrogate fetuses to term. An opinion like that would make a damn fool out of a man, and this is no job for a damn fool. All I can tell you is, I tried it—and that is something I wouldn't've dreamed of doing if it hadn't been for her and her crazy idea. I left here at four a.m. with some throat smears and by nine I had a half dozen of them isolated and in nutrient solution. Beef blood plasma—the quickest thing I could get ready. And I got mitosis. They divided, and in a few hours I could see two of 'em dimpling to form the gastrosphore. That was evidence enough to get going; that's all I think and that's all I told them on the phone. And by the time I got here," he added,

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waving toward the big barn, "there's a research lab four-fifths built, big enough for a city medical center. Argue?" he demanded, returning to Dr. Rathburn's original question. "How could I argue? Why should I? . . . And that *girl.* She's a force, like gravity. She can turn on so much pressure, and I mean by herself and personally, that she could probably get anything in the world she wanted even if she didn't own it, the world I mean. Put that in the northeast entrance!" he bellowed at a foreman. "I'll be down to show you just where it goes." He turned to Rathburn; he was a man on fire. "I got to go."

"Anything I can do," said Dr. Rathburn, "just say it."

"That's the wonderful part of it," said Weber. "That's what everybody around here keeps saying, and they mean it!" He trotted down toward the barn, and Rathburn turned toward the castle.

About a month after his last venture at trespassing, Guy Gibbon was coming home from work when a man at the corner put away a newspaper and, still folding it, said, "Gibbon?"

"That's right," said Guy, a little sharply.

The man looked him up and down, quickly, but giving an impression of such thoroughness, efficiency and experience that Guy would not have been surprised to learn that the man had not only catalogued his clothes and their source, their state of maintenance and a computation therefrom of his personal habits, but also his state of health and even his blood type. "My name's Keogh," said the man. "Does that mean anything to you?"

"No."

"Sylva never mentioned the name?"

"Sylva! N-no, she didn't."

"Let's go somewhere and have a drink. I'd like to talk to you." Something had pleased this man: Guy wondered what. "Well, okay," he said. "Only I don't drink much, but well, okay."

They found a bar in the neighborhood with booths in the back. Keogh had a scotch and soda and Guy, after some hesitation, ordered beer. Guy said, "You know her?"

"Most of her life. Do you?"

"What? Well, sure. We're going to get married." He looked studiously into his beer and said uncomfortably, "Who are you anyway, Mr. Keogh?"

"You might say," said Keogh, "I'm *in loco parentis.*" He waited for a response, then added, "Sort of a guardian."

"She never said anything about a guardian."

"I can understand that. What has she told you about herself?"

Guy's discomfort descended to a level of shyness, diffidence, even

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a touch of fear—which did not alter the firmness of his words, however they were spoken. "I don't know you, Mr. Keogh. I don't think I ought to answer any questions about Sylva. Or me. Or anything." He looked up at the man. Keogh searched deeply, then smiled. It was an unpracticed and apparently slightly painful process with him, but it was genuine for all that. "Good!" he barked, and rose. "Come on." He left the booth and Guy, more than a little startled, followed. They went to the phone booth in the corner. Keogh dropped in a nickel, dialed, and waited, his eyes fixed on Guy. Then Guy had to listen to one side of the conversation:

"I'm here with Guy Gibbon." (Guy had to notice that Keogh identified himself only with his voice.)

. . . "Of course I knew about it. That's a silly question, girl."

. . . "Because it *is* my business. *You* are my business."

. . . "Stop it? I'm not trying to stop anything. I just have to know, that's all."

. . . "All right. All right. . . . He's here. He won't talk about you or anything, which is good. Yes, very good. Will you please tell him to open up?"

And he handed the receiver to a startled Guy, who said tremulously, "Uh, hello," to it while watching Keogh's impassive face.

Her voice suffused and flooded him, changed this whole unsettling experience to something different and good. "Guy, darling."

"Sylva—"

"It's all right. I should have told you sooner, I guess. It had to come some time. Guy, you can tell Keogh anything you like. Anything he asks."

"Why, honey? Who is he, anyway?"

There was a pause, then a strange little laugh. "He can explain that better than I can. You want us to be married, Guy?"

"Oh yes!"

"Well all right then. Nobody can change that, nobody but you. And listen, Guy, I'll live anywhere, any way you want to live. That's the real truth and all of it, do you believe me?"

"I always believe you."

"All right then. So that's what we'll do. Now you go and talk to Keogh. Tell him anything he wants to know. He has to do the same. I love you, Guy."

"Me too," said Guy, watching Keogh's face. "Well okay then," he added when she said nothing further. " 'Bye." He hung up.

He and Keogh had a long talk.

"It hurts him," she whispered to Dr. Rathburn.

"I know." He shook his head sympathetically. "There's just so much morphine you can ram into a man, though."

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"Just a little more?"

"Maybe a little," he said sadly. He went to his bag and got the needle. Sylva kissed the sleeping man tenderly and left the room. Keogh was waiting for her.

He said. "This has got to stop, girl."

"Why?" she responded ominously.

"Let's get out of here."

She had known Keogh so long, and so well, that she was sure he had no surprises for her. But this voice, this look, these were something new in Keogh. He held the door for her, so she preceded him through it and then went where he silently led.

They left the castle and took the path through a heavy copse and over the brow of the hill which overlooked the barn. The parking lot, which had once been a barnyard, was full of automobiles. A white ambulance approached; another was unloading at the northeast platform. A muffled generator purred somewhere behind the building, and smoke rose from the stack of the new stone boiler-room at the side. They both looked avidly at the building but did not comment. The path took them along the crest of the hill and down toward the lake. They went to a small forest clearing in which stood an eight-foot Diana, the huntress Diana, chaste and fleet-footed, so beautifully finished she seemed not like marble at all, not like anything cold or static. "I always had the idea," said Keogh, "that nobody can lie anywhere near her."

She looked up at the Diana.

"Not even to themselves," said Keogh, and plumped down on a marble bench.

"Let's have it," she said.

"You want to make Guy Gibbon happen all over again. It's a crazy idea and it's a big one too. But lots of things were crazier, and some bigger, and now they're commonplace. I won't argue on how crazy it is, or how big."

"What then?"

"I've been trying, the last day or so, to back 'way out, far off, get a look at this thing with some perspective. Sylva, you've forgotten something."

"Good," she said. "Oh, good. I knew you'd think of things like this before it was too late."

"So you can find a way out?" Slowly he shook his head. "Not this time. Tighten up the Wyke guts, girl, and make up your mind to quit."

"Go ahead."

"It's just this. I don't believe you're going to get your carbon copy, mind you, but you just might. I've been talking to Weber, and by God you just about might. But if you do, all you've got is a container, and nothing to fill it with. Look, girl, a man isn't blood and bone and body cells, and that's all."

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He paused, until she said, "Go on, Keogh."

He demanded, "You love this guy?"

"Keogh!" She was amused.

"Whaddaya love?" he barked. "That skrinkly hair? The muscles, skin? His nat'ral equipment? The eyes, voice?"

"All that," she said composedly.

"All that, and that's all?" he demanded relentlessly. "Because if your answer is yes, you can have what you want, and more power to you, and good riddance. I don't know anything about love, but I will say this: that if that's all there is to it, the hell with it."

"Well of *course* there's more."

"Ah. And where are you going to get that, girl? Listen, a man is the skin and bone he stands in, plus what's in his head, plus what's in his heart. You mean to reproduce Guy Gibbon, but you're not going to do it by duplicating his carcass. You want to duplicate the whole man, you're going to have to make him live the same life again. And that you can't do."

She looked up at the Diana for a long time. Then, "Why not?" she breathed.

"I'll tell you why not," he said angrily. "Because first of all you have to find out *who he is.*"

"I know who he is!"

He spat explosively on the green moss by the bench. It was totally uncharacteristic and truly shocking. "You don't know a particle, and I know even less. I had his back against a wall one time for better than two hours, trying to find out who he is. He's just another kid, is all. Nothing much in school, nothing much at sports, same general tastes and feelings as six zillion other ones like him. Why him, Sylva? Why him? What did you ever see in a guy like that to be worth the marrying?"

"I . . . didn't know you disliked him."

"Oh hell, girl, I don't! I never said that. I can't—I can't even find anything to dislike!"

"You don't know him the way I do."

"There, I agree. I don't and I couldn't. Because you don't know anything either—you *feel,* but you don't *know.* If you want to see Guy Gibbon again, or a reasonable facsimile, he's going to have to live by a script from the day he's born. He'll have to duplicate every experience that this kid here ever had."

"All right," she said quietly.

He looked at her, stunned. He said, "And before he can do that, we have to write the script. And before we can write it, we have to get the material somehow. What do you expect to do—set up a Foundation or something dedicated to the discovery of each and every moment this—this unnoticeable young man ever lived

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through? And do it secretly, because while he's growing up he can't ever know? Do you know how much that would cost, how many people it would involve?"

"That would be all right," she said.

"And suppose you had it, a biography written like a script, twenty years of a lifetime, every day, every hour you could account for; now you're going to have to arrange for a child, from birth, to be surrounded by people who are going to play this script out—and who will never let anything else happen to him but what's in the script, and who will never let him know."

"That's it! That's it!" she cried.

He leapt to his feet and swore at her. He said, "I'm not planning this, you love-struck lunatic, I'm objecting to it!"

"Is there any more?" she cried eagerly. "Keogh, Keogh, try—try hard. How do we start? What do we do first? Quick, Keogh."

He looked at her, thunderstruck, and at last sank down on the bench and began to laugh weakly. She sat by him, held his hand, her eyes shining. After a time he sobered, and turned to her. He drank the shine of those eyes for a while; and after, his brain began to function again . . . on Wyke business . . .

"The main source of who he is and what he's done," he said at last, "won't be with us much longer. . . . We better go tell Rathburn to get him off the morphine. He has to be able to think."

"All right," she said. "All right."

When the pain got too much to permit him to remember any more, they tried a little morphine again. For a while they found a balance between recollection and agony, but the agony gained. Then they severed his spinal cord so he couldn't feel it. They brought in people—psychiatrist, stenographers, even a professional historian.

In the rebuilt barn, Weber tried animal hosts, cows even, and primates—everything he could think of. He got some results, though no good ones. He tried humans too. He couldn't cross the bridge of body tolerance; the uterus will not support an alien fetus any more than the hand will accept the graft of another's finger.

So he tried nutrient solutions. He tried a great many. Ultimately he found one that worked. It was the blood plasma of pregnant women.

He placed the best of the quasi-ova between sheets of sterilized chamois. He designed automatic machinery to drip the plasma in at arterial tempo, drain it at a veinous rate, keep it at body temperature.

One day fifty of them died, because of choloform used in one of the adhesives. When light seemed

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to affect them adversely, Weber designed containers of bakelite. When ordinary photography proved impractical he designed a new kind of film sensitive to heat, the first infra-red film.

The viable fetuses he had at 60 days showed the eye-spot, the spine, the buds of arms, a beating heart. Each and every one of them consumed, or was bathed in, over a gallon of plasma a day, and at one point there were one hundred and seventy-four thousand of them. Then they began to die off —some malformed, some chemically unbalanced, many for reasons too subtle even for Weber and his staff.

When he had done all he could, when he could only wait and see, he had fetuses seven months along and growing well. There were twenty-three of them. Guy Gibbon was dead quite a while by then, and his widow came to see Weber and tiredly put down a stack of papers and reports, urged him to read, begged him to call her as soon as he had.

He read them, he called her. He refused what she asked.

She got hold of Keogh. He refused to have anything to do with such an idea. She made him change his mind. Keogh made Weber change his mind.

The stone barn hummed with construction again, and new machinery. The cold tank was four by six feet inside, surrounded by coils and sensing devices. They put her in it.

By that time the fetuses were eight and a half months along. There were four left.

One made it.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: To the reader, but especially to the reader in his early twenties, let me ask: did you ever have the feeling that you were getting pushed around? Did you ever want to do something, and have all sorts of obstacles thrown in your way until you had to give up, while on the other hand some other thing you wanted was made easy for you? Did you ever feel that certain strangers know who you are? Did you ever meet a girl who made you explode inside, who seemed to like you—and who was mysteriously plucked out of your life, as if she shouldn't be in the script?

Well, we've all had these feelings. Yet if you've read the above, you'll allow it's a little more startling than just a story. It reads like an analogy, doesn't it? I mean, it doesn't have to be a castle, or the ol' swimmin' hole, and the names have been changed to protect the innocent . . . author.

Because it could be about time for her to wake up, aged only two or three years for her twenty-year cold sleep. And when she meets you, it's going to be the biggest thing that ever happened to you since the last time. ◀▶

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James Blish, in this sinewy and succinct article, pays our Guest of Honor the unspoken compliment of realizing that the corpus of Theodore Sturgeon's work is not only too large in volume but too large in quality for a mature critic to consider covering completely in one essay. A circle's measurement, as Charles Fort reminds us, can be begun anywhere . . . Mr. Blish, therefore, accepting that "a second is a cross-section of eternity," scans — and scans well — only a few degrees of the marvelous circle of Sturgeon. His report will demand, and will well repay, your concentration.

THEODORE STURGEON'S MACROCOSM

by James Blish

ONE OF THE MINOR MYSTERIES of Theodore Sturgeon's career is his hospitality toward a popular and thoroughly competent story called *Microcosmic God*. If you compliment the author on this yarn, he is likely to respond with the polite purr which is as close as he can usually come to a snarl. If you don't mention the subject, Sturgeon will probably bring it up himself.

I don't propose to try to read the author's mind, which I regard as one of the major critical crimes; but looking back at *Microcosmic God* over the landscape of Sturgeon's long career, one can see that it is an atypical Sturgeon story in a number of ways. One of these differences lies in its central character, who is—let us whisper it—a scientist maddened by power.

It's unlike any other story about a mad scientist you are ever likely to encounter, but its theme is about as close as Sturgeon can come to being conventional. It's characteristic of much of science fiction that its central figures tend to be great scientists, senators, galactic presidents, space-fleet admirals, and other wheelers-and-dealers, though very few of the authors in-

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volved have ever met so much as their state assemblyman or even know his name. Sturgeon's work is not like this.

Sturgeon's characters, if assembled in one room, would make a marvelously motley crowd, but almost all of them would be people you would not look at twice in any crowd. A few bulldozer operators; a little girl disowned by her family (but how could you tell that?); a male clerk; a ragged outcast; a boarding-house peeping Tom (but how would you know?); and so on. Ordinary, all of them—with the exception of Kidder, the mad scientist, and *Mr. Costello, Hero* who bodies forth almost blindingly the author's positive and pure loathing for all wheelers-and-dealers.

None of these people is in the least ordinary in Sturgeon's hands. A good many of them are what most readers would regard as rather repellent characters, but Sturgeon almost always handles them with the love—not the forgiveness, which is another matter—that is born of understanding.

This is, I repeat, a rare and valuable quality in science fiction. It leads us to another and even more important fact about Sturgeon's work: It is intensely personal.

Most writers who cling to some one form of specialized fiction—whether it be the detective story, the Western, or the slick story—do so in my opinion because these more or less stereotyped forms do not require them to reveal themselves. As a good many other people have observed, any serious work of fiction is bound to be autobiographical in part. It was Thomas Wolfe who said that it would be hard to imagine a more autobiographical work than *Gulliver's Travels*—a startling example at first encounter, but the more one mulls it over, the more just it seems. Science fiction in particular has often been criticised for its conventionality, and even more for the cold, cerebral atmosphere which its authors seem to prefer to breathe. Though its authors have as many idiosyncracies of style and approach as a porcupine has quills, the *emotional* tones of what they produce are virtually interchangeable.

Sturgeon's work is charged with highly personal emotion—so much so that I have long suspected that it embarrasses his younger readers, who likes science fiction precisely because it puts little stress on their own untried emotions. (And here it might be added that the emotional tone of *Microcosmic God* is pretty standard stuff for science fiction—that is, it's hardly there at all—which again makes it highly atypical Sturgeon.)

Kingsley Amis and others have also pointed to the undoubted fact that there is very little sex of any kind in most science fiction, and this fits nicely with my hypothesis that most s-f authors cling to the

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genre because it doesn't require them to reveal themselves. For any author, writing about sex is at the beginning a hard lump to get over, because it reveals a knowledge of matters previously supposed to be not proper, or perhaps even positively forbidden. That very first sex scene is almost impossible to write if what is really at the back of your mind is, "Suppose Mom should read it?" I have the undocumentable suspicion that many science-fiction writers, including some of the major ones, have never gotten beyond this point in their development, and don't want to, either.

All of Sturgeon's major work is about love. He has so testified, but had he kept mum about the matter it would have been discovered anyhow; it is right there on the page. This, for Sturgeon, is far from a limited subject, for he has stretched the word to include nearly every imaginable form of human relationship. Here again I think he is probably always in danger of embarassing a large part of his audience; the rest of us are fortunate that, if he is aware of this danger, he evidently doesn't give a damn.

This is, as he himself has said, why he has written so much about complicated biological relationships involving three or more partners, most of which have technical names hard to find even in good unabridged dictionaries. It is why, in recent years particularly, he has seemed so preoccupied with telepathy; it has nothing to do with the didactic madness on this subject which has dominated so much of the field since World War II, but instead reflects his larger preoccupation with all the possible forms of love relationships. It is significantly different from the kind of telepathy one usually finds in such stories, too: in fact, what Sturgeon seems to be talking about is not telepathy at all, but something I am tempted to call telempathy—a barbarous word, but perhaps no worse a one than its model. Sturgeon's word for it is love, and a very good word it is.

Directly under this heading belongs Sturgeon's love affair with the English language, which has been as complicated, stormy and rewarding as any affair he has ever written about. He is a born experimenter, capable of the most outrageous excesses in search of precision and poetry; people who do not like puns, for example, are likely to find most Sturgeon copy almost as offensive as late Joyce (and I am sorry for them). Nobody else in our microcosm could possibly have produced such a stylistic explosion as *To Here and the Easel,* because in fact nobody else would have seen that the subject couldn't have been handled in any other way. (This is my favorite Sturgeon story, which may explain why I think it's been neglected.)

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In addition, Sturgeon is an intensely visual writer; his images come almost exclusively from what he sees, as Joyce's came almost exclusively from what he heard. Readers who do not think in terms of visual images—a very large group, perhaps as many as half—are likely to be baffled by this; they will get along much better with a writer like Poul Anderson, who follows a deliberate policy of appealing to at least three senses in every scene. Sturgeon's extremes of visualization probably lie at the root of the rather common complaint that he is a "mannered" writer. The charge as stated is untrue, for Sturgeon has many manners, adopted or cast off at the bidding of the subject-matter; but it is true that he is often to be caught in visual similes that must seem wild indeed to that body of readers whose minds work most comfortably with abstractions. One of the commonest of such complaints in my experience homes on his comparison (in *More Than Human*, one of the very few authentic masterpieces science fiction can boast) of marmalade with a stained-glass window. Most of the complainers call this simile "strained" (in itself a strange word to apply to marmalade); yet to me it seems as just as it is startling, in particular when you observe that the man in the book to whom breakfast is being served is actually trembling on the verge of starvation.

No author, not even Dostoevski, ever managed to be all things to all men, and Theodore Sturgeon has never bothered to try. He has concentrated a lifetime into being caviar for Theodore Sturgeon, and giving the rest of us the privilege of sharing the feast. In the process, he has made himself the finest conscious artist science fiction has ever had, which is purely and simply a bonus that we had no right to expect or even to ask. We are all more in his debt than we realize, even in this hour of his honors.

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*As Judith Merril, author (WISH UPON A STAR, F&SF Dec., 1958; DEATH CANNOT WITHER, F&SF Feb., 1959) and anthologist (SF: THE YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION, now in its sixth series) has told the story, a peddler once knocked on the door of her Chelsea apartment. He sold nothing, and was obviously no real peddler at all, but an agent of The Little People; for he told her that there was another science fiction writer living not far away, Theodore Sturgeon by name. This was some several years ago, and Miss Merril has had time to become well-acquainted with the fascinating subject of this, her first article for us. Non-Sturgeon-lovers (if such there be—*can *there be such?), take warning: she is partisan.*

THEODORE STURGEON

by Judith Merril

THE MAN HAS *style.*

The same quality of 'voice' or 'presence' that makes the most unevenly composed Sturgeon story compellingly readable, marks his personality with equally unmistakeable (if no more definable) fascination.

He is a man of varied interests and strong opinions, many skills and endless paradox. Snob-and-vulgarian, athlete-and-aesthete, mystic-and-mechanic, he is detached and merry, humble and arrogant, over-mannered and deeply courteous—a manicured nudist, a man of elegant naturalness, thoughtful simplicity, schooled ease, and studied spontaneity.

Strangers always notice him; children respond with immediate and lasting confidence; those who know him, like or dislike him. No one is indifferent—and no two see quite the same man.

No two are presented with quite the same man. Yet there is rarely intent to deceive (I would have said *never,* but one must allow for the natural effects of, for instance, bill collectors, Internal Revenue officers, and certain publishers); nor is deception ordinarily the result. The change of face or stance or style, from one audi-

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ence to another may be anywhere from subtle to sensational; but each attitude is as genuine as the last—simply a new permutation of the internal contradictions.

Beauty is a state of mind compounded of harmony and/or contrast with the environment of the beautiful thing, he wrote me once. *The environment does not have to be concrete, but it does have a hell of a lot to do with the reflexes of the beholder . . .*

This is one of the basic ingredients of Sturgeon's style. In his work, the choice of language, the prose (or poetic) meter, sometimes even the syntax, is generated by the situation or character: a constant variation of prose pattern is one of the elements that marks his writing style. In his person, a similar variable surface stems in the same way from the instinct for "harmony and/or contrast."

"Sturgeon is living his own biography," one close mutual friend used to say in moments of maximum frustration with the eternally sincere poseur. And though I doubt Ted has given much thought —or would care, if he did—to the figure he may someday cut in a scholar's summary, it is certainly true that he insists on revising the script constantly. He simply cannot stand idly by and see the dramatic unities destroyed by the gross, absurd hand of real happenstance: there is never a doubt which road to follow, when logic or self-interest depart from the moment's artistic necessities.

There are certain things about Ted that are (comparatively) unvarying: attributes that change, as in all of us, only with time and growth. His appearance is one.

Now in his early forties, Sturgeon looks perhaps ten years younger. A bit above average height (perhaps five-ten?), he is slender in build, but determinedly fit. (His first ambition was to be a circus acrobat.) He is just short of being conventionally handsome, but the trim beard he adopted years back (before they were fashionable) is the touch that turns what was almost a faunlike countenance into a faintly satanic mask. His hair has darkened in recent years, he was once as gold-blond as his son, Robin, is now.

(It might have been more fitting to say that he pre-writes his own biography: it was not until six years or so after he wrote "Maturity" that his son was born —and, simultaneously, that the changes described in the first Robin began to materialize in the author.)

He is a warm person, and the only formalities he practices are his own—such rituals of behavior as he has devised to suit his own purposes (or, rather, pleasures. At work—any kind of work—he is impatiently, starkly, functional). He is (almost) obsessively clean,

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with a passion for neatness and pleasing design. (Note the "almost," nothing is ever all-one-way with Ted. He is fond of saying: "The definition of perversion is anything done to the exclusion of everything else—including the normal position.")

He loves good food, good drink, good talk, good music, good decor, good looks, good manners. He hates dirt, sweat, too-loud voices, ill-fitting clothes, clumsy behavior. (*I feel that the nearest to a basic you can get is in living graciously. I can only know my own definition of graciousness, and it is one that precludes hating a man for his black skin, pissing on other people's rugs, going naked when it will distress others, sleeping with other men's wives, violating privacy, and any number of other delightful or uncomfortable or fun-making things . . .*)

He acquires skills with the dedication of a collector: offhand, I know him to be anywhere from competent to expert as a chauffeur, guitarist, radio (and general electronics) repairman, cook, bulldozer operator, automobile mechanic, and maker-of-whathaveyous - from - wire - hangers - toothbrushes-and-old-bottles. He also sings well, and speaks with an unusually, noticeably, clear diction —and with a wit that is, mostly, warm and friendly.

His home is a delight to visit, not only because of the comfort—to eye, body, and taste buds—achieved by the joint efforts of Ted and Marion, but because *of* them, and their four remarkable children. (Robin, the miniature Ted, is ten; Tandy, as much a small Marion, eight; Noelle, just turning six, is a jubilant mixture of both; two-year-old Timothy seems to be starting the cycle again.) Marion is a childish-looking, soft-spoken, shy-seeming, white-skinned girl with long black hair, with strength, compassion, and wisdom enough for ten ordinary women; and like everything else with which Ted tries to surround himself (seldom so successfully) she is truly beautiful—not only from the inside out, but in face and body as well. The children have that rare blend of truly-free wildness, individuality, and considerate behavior that one meets, ordinarily, only in a certain kind of British novel. It would be foolish to try to say more about any of them here: it could not be done in twice the length, and Ted himself has done (and is doing) it, far better than I could hope to. ("Tandy's Story," published last year in *Galaxy*, will appear sometime soon in book form, from Bantam, accompanied by "Robin's Story," and the rest of the set.)

Suffice it to (under) state here, that the "new Sturgeon," the sure-handed writer who emerged from the promising young talent of

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1939-1942, (after ten intervening years of creative crisis and uneven production—long dry spells punctuated by some fine stories and some not so fine), the Sturgeon that starts with "Baby Is Three," and "Saucer of Loneliness," is very much the husband and father of this family—and they are inextricably a part of the mature writer.

There is another reason why it is pleasant to visit the Sturgeons: that is that visits are discouraged unless it *will* be pleasant. As in any family, there are days (or weeks or months) when the children are sick, someone is bad-tempered, the plumbing goes out, or—as in the family of any free-lance writer—food is scarce and drink is scarcer. The Sturgeons do not, really, lead a charmed life; it just *seems* that way.

It has to seem that way; that's part of the Sturgeon style.

In my first list of paradoxes, I stressed the "manicured nudist." * I mentioned later that his near-obsession with cleanliness and tidiness had an exception. The exception is work. The most obvious thing about the Sturgeon style, is the *easiness* of it, but that ease is earned the hard way.

Not many people see Sturgeon work. Even his family sees little of the worst of it. He has, currently, a work room in the garage, where he does his sweating at night. It is drab and dusty and littered, and looks remarkably like the workrooms of most scholarly people. (Could there be some profound significance in the fact that with all the techniques Ted has mastered so expertly, he remains a poor typist?)

An editor, fretting about an overdue novel of Ted's, once told me: "He says he has three days' work left to do. I believe him. I know he can write a novel in three days. But which three days is it going to be?"

The editor was almost right, but also wrong. I have known Sturgeon to sit at the typewriter (in an attic or cellar or closed-off bedroom, before the garage, uncombed, paper-strewn, coffee-nerved, and sweating) for hours on end, sleepless and almost foodless, producing a steady stream of (one-draft, final-copy) words, hour after hour. (I think the record for three days, though—with catnaps and sandwiches—was not quite two-thirds of a novel.) But typing is only one part of the job.

*Yes, if you've been wondering; those rumors are at least partly true. Ted was, for some years, an enthusiastic (nay, evangelical) nudist. He qualifies as the only Playmate (Playboy?) of science-fiction (male or female, as far as I know), having had a nude photo published with an interview. Well, almost nude: the man from the Daily News took the shot with the typewriter in front of him to preserve his modesty.

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"Nobody can do two things at the same time," Ted says lightly. "I never think while I'm writing." He doesn't. The thinking comes first, between the false starts and in the glare of the virgin white sheet on the typer roller.

(He said it a little differently in "The Perfect Host:") *You want to write a story, see, and you sit down in front of the mill, wait until that certain feeling comes to you, hold off a second longer just to be quite sure that you know exactly what you want to do, take a deep breath, and get up and make a pot of coffee.*

This sort of thing is likely to go on for days, until you are out of coffee and can't get more until you can pay for same, which you can do by writing a story and selling it; or until you get tired of messing around and sit down and write a yarn purely by means of knowing how to do it and applying the knowledge.

Neither way of saying it explains why he loses weight in the process. He sweats—just like people; he does it in private. When he's done enough of it, out of the mill comes the fluent graceful prose anyone would know as Sturgeon's.

The operative phrase in that quote is "knowing how to do it and applying the knowledge." In an enormously gratifying introduction to a short story collection of mine, Ted publicly disclaimed any responsibility for me as a writer. When he learned I was writing this article, he reminded me, sternly, of his version of the matter. Having been forbidden to extend public gratitude, and with full intention of doing so, perhaps, I can take the curse off it, by taking some credit to myself first:—

It was I who taught Sturgeon how much he knew about writing; I did it by listening, and asking an occasional question, while he was teaching me everything he knew about writing. (The differences that are still evident are, I am afraid, a matter of art rather than craft.)

I am not just joking. At the time that Ted decided I should, and by-damn *would,* write science fiction, he was still recovering from the double shock of his first prolonged experience with "writer's block," and the breakup of his first marriage. He could not think ill enough of himself. (His best stories then were tragedies—or self-mockeries: "Maturity," "Thunder and Roses," "It Wasn't Syzygy," "The Sky Was Full of Ships." There was even one, less memorable, *called* "That Low.") And his sad theme, reiterated, was: "I want to be liked or admired for something I *do*—not just for what I *am.*" Or, alternatively:

"I'm not a writer. You are,

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Phil * is. I'm not. A writer is someone who has to write. The only reason I want to write is because it's the only way I can justify all the other things I didn't do."

At the same time, he was scouring his mind for what helpful odds and ends it might contain for a novice writer. (I did not mean to imply that Sturgeon formed his intent against my will; I could hardly talk or think of anything else in those days—but to me it was a hopeless hope. I knew I was literate; I could do research; I could write a tolerable article, or even a "hack" pulp story, to formula rules. But to be *A Writer*, which was something else again, one needed Talent and Imagination . . .)

The first thing he did was to give me a book.

He had seen some (sincere, young, and of course free verse) poetry of mine in a fan magazine. He liked one poem, said so, and showed up a few days later with Clement Wood's "Complete Rhyming Dictionary and Poet's Craft Book," inscribed:

I give it so that Judy can
Become a goddam artisan.

He suggested, gently, that I try my hand first at some of the French light verse forms. I did try one, and decided to go on to greater things. I wrote a sonnet; or so I thought. It had the right number of lines and rhymes in the right places, and it was in iambics. I sent it to Ted, and got back a five page critique, line by line. Some lines he even praised; but he began with a sort of first-grade explanation that a sonnet is *never*, not ever, in tetrameter; each line, always, has ten syllables, not eight. He wrote, in part:

Keep pure and faithful your respect for the form. Violate it nowhere, ever, not in the slightest shift of syllabic value. Our language, with all its faults, is one of the most completely expressive in history. (Joseph Conrad thought so well of it that he adopted it completely. When using it, never forget that godlike compliment.) We have a highly flexible grammar. Verbs can be placed anywhere in a sentence. Parenthetical thoughts are in the idiom. The rich sources of English have brought to it shades of meaning and choices between sounds which are unparalleled in other tongues . .

. . . I find little fault with your punctuation, but it might help you to assume my view of it; namely, that punctuation is inflection *in print. To me, "She loves me—" is heard differently from "She loves me . . ." and from "She loves me." There is a speak-*

**Phil Klass—William Tenn: at that time he was also a new writer—two stories ahead of me (he had two published). For most of a semi-starved year, just before the Big S-F Boom started, the three of us lived—or so it now seems—on one ten dollar bill loaned around in continuous rotation.*

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ing difference between a colon and a semicolon and a coma . . .

. . . If you master this form, you will have such a feel for the music of words that in your odes and your vers libre your work will be completely compelling, and in your prose your songful characters will speak, when their thoughts sing, with singing . . .

He said, apologetically, that there were only two things he could really tell me about story writing, and that one of those was not his own thought, but had been told to him by Will Jenkins. It was the basic device for generating a plot—

Start with a character, some one with certain strong, even compulsive personality traits. Put him in a situation which in some way negates a vital trait. Watch the character solve the problem.

I don't think I have ever written a successful story that emerged any other way.

The second piece of advice was his own, and this was: *see* everything you write about. Don't put a word down until you can see the whole scene for yourself—the room, or outdoors area, all the people, including the ones who do nothing; the colors and shapes; the weather; clothes, furnishingings, everything. Then describe only those parts concerned in the action; or describe nothing, except what your characters do; they will be behaving in context, and the reader will be able to *rebuild* a complete scene from the pieces of the pattern you've given. It doesn't matter if this scene is different from yours; it will have the same meaning in his frame of reference that yours did for you.

This is one of the most astonishing pieces of instruction on record—simply because I have never heard it anywhere else. It seems so *obvious*—once you know it.

He wrote me the letter with the first quote I used here, about the nature of beauty; it was, in context, concerned with the ability to *create* beauty. And another letter picks up a theme he spent hours on: *. . . imagination is a thing like language skill or how to drink brandy—something which can be done well or badly, too much or not enough . . .*

It would be impossible to detail, one by one, the things he taught me, or the boosts he gave. I doubt that I remember all of them now. Most of it was so well absorbed that I no longer distinguish it as something learned from Ted. I have relayed what I recall most vividly, and will yet add an incident or two, primarily for two reasons.

The first is that, in all seriousness, he learned something vital to him in the process, and I think it constituted a sort of turning point,

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starting up from the extreme of his depression. It was, I believe, the day I read "Bianca's Hands," in carbon (the ms. was then in England, submitted for the British *Argosy* short story contest). I did not—do not—like the story. Even more, I disliked his effort to compare it with Ray Bradbury's work. I had at that time read exactly one Bradbury story I liked. (I have since read several that were published before then, and many written afterwards, that I greatly admire. But this was 1947; most of Bradbury up till then was in the *Weird Tales* vein, and this is rarely to my taste.) In any case, I was somewhat brusque in my criticism. Ted, perhaps defensively, explained it had been written many years earlier, and that he had showed it to me for one section, just redone: several paragraphs of deliberately constructed poetry, highlighting an emotional crisis, but spelled out like prose, so that it did not appear to break into the narrative.

And it was in pointing this out (I had missed it, as he expected.) that he stopped, astonished, and said he had just realized how much he did know about how to write—that it was a skill, with him, not just a talent.

Whatever reinforcement the recognition needed came very soon afterwards, when the story won the first prize of $1000.

I never again heard the line about "something I do, not just something I am."

My other reason for leading you through my primer class as a writer is that I feel it reveals some vital aspects of Sturgeon's personality that I have not seen expounded in any of the several eulogies, prefaces, blurbs, and biographies I have read myself. Nor could I (I *tried!*) describe these facets myself, except by playback.

I might mention, here, that this article has been the most difficult piece of nonfiction I have ever done. How many false starts I made, or how many pages of unused copy will wind up in the circular file, I don't want to count. I started out to do a straightforward biographical article, with some, like, personal touches. (You know: "I was there, when . . .") And the more I tried, the more I realized I was, probably, uniquely unqualified to write anything balanced, objective, or factually informative about Ted Sturgeon. ("Probably," because there are others who know him, as person and writer, at least as well as I do; some of these have also been the beneficiaries of his astonishing capacity for advice, support, instruction, and encouragement of younger writers. But—) I believe my position is unique, because I am not only a friend, fan, colleague, and sometime protegé; I am also, in one sense, Ted's own invention.

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The first Judith Merril story published was called, "That Only A Mother . . ." (I had done these pulp jobs under various bylines.) It was on the strength of that one story, before it was published, that I got the editorial job at Bantam Books which led directly to my first anthology. Less directly, the same story had much to do with Doubleday's acceptance of my first novel, on the basis of a short and unfinished sample. It was Sturgeon who supplied the confidence, and ultimately, the challenge, to try to write the story; in between, he also supplied—by accident—the ideas for the central problem and the central character. All I did was write it; after that, it was Ted, again, who took it to his own agent; and it was in the agent's office that it was read by those people who later influenced jobs and contracts. All this was, to some extent, happenstance. But the author of the story was created by design—Sturgeon's design.

Sometime before I gathered up my courage to try the "serious story," I had already determined to be a freelance writer (of articles and "hack pulp stories"). For several reasons, irrelevant here, I wanted a pen-name. Among others, I asked Ted for ideas. He suggested my daughter, Merril's, first name. I balked; none of my reasons included the wish to change my Jewish name to anything so flamboyantly anglo-saxon-sounding.

Ted reacted with unwonted anger, and we parted in mutual irritation. Three days later, I had a letter, explaining things, with an enclosure—a sonnet called, "On The Birth of Judith Merril!"

Two lines of the poem had come to his mind, you see, while we were talking (in an ice-cream parlor!). From that point on, all my arguments were unreasonable and obstreperous. He went home to finish the story he was working on: an assigned job with a sure check at the end, which he needed badly. But the poem kept growing. Finally—

. . . remembering something you had said about your Hebrew name, I went to the encyclopedia . . . It was right in there, reproduced also in Greek script and in Hebrew, and it means Jewess. It doesn't mean anything else but Jewess. . . .

With this reassurance that I was bound to change my mind, he spent the next day on the sonnet. The letter goes on—

. . . . it is a Petrarchan sonnet, which means that its form is extremely rigid and complex. The rhyme scheme is 1 2 2 1, 1 2 2 1, 3 4 5, 3 4 5. Notice that there is no rhymed couplet at the end, as is found in Shakespearean and Wordsworthian sonnets. The idea is presented in the octet (the first eight lines) and resolved in the

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sestet. I'd rather build something like this than eat, which is demonstrable . . .

(Well, what would *you* have done? Let a reasonable prejudice stand in the way of a compulsive christening?) I had a name.

The man is full of self-contradictions: he is blind and perceptive; rational and illogical; pedantic and lyrical; self-centered and warmly outgiving. But he does each side of all the coins with *style.*

One more anecdote, about the final challenge that sent me home to write my story: —

I was leaving the apartment he then shared with L. Jerome Stanton. It was just after the big news about "Bianca's Hands," and Ted was effusing in all directions, including mine. He went to the door with me, told me to go home and write a better one. I took it as mocking. He stopped himself in mid-explanation (of his sincerity) and said, suddenly, pointing to the hall wall:

"Look!"

I did, and looked back questioningly.

"Look! Don't you see it?"

"See what?"

"The little green man, running up the wall . . .?"

I shook my head, smiled faintly. "Nope."

"Keep looking. Look. See! Right there? He has a long green cap sticking straight out, and he's taking tiny little steps . . ."

I didn't see any green man, and I said as much. "What's more, if there was one, he'd be taking long draggy steps and his cap would hang down, going up that wall . . ."

"There," he said triumphantly. "See? I write fantasy. You write science fiction."

So I did—and came, eventually, to be asked to write about Sturgeon. Well, as I said, I am prejudiced; and the things that seemed important to say left no room for statistics. These have, in any case, been more than adequately compiled elsewhere. (See Sam Moskowitz's very fine biography in the February, 1962, *Amazing.*) I have tried to portray what I could of an unusual and admirable human being. But it's tough, when you're writing about a man whose style you can't possibly match.

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Sam Moskowitz is so well known as a historian of Science Fiction that this bibliography needs no more introduction than his name.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION BY THEODORE STURGEON

A chronological listing of the first publication of his fantasy and science fiction works, with a few non fantasies (indicated by an asterisk*) of associational interest.*

Research and compilation by Sam Moskowitz

1939

Ether Breather, Astounding Science-Fiction, Sept.
A God in the Garden, Unknown, Oct.

1940

Derm Fool, Unknown, March
He Shuttles, Unknown, April
It, Unknown, Aug.
Butyl and the Breather, Astounding Science Fiction, Oct.
Cargo, Unknown, Nov.

1941

Completely Automatic, Astounding Science Fiction, Feb.
The Ultimate Egoist, Unknown, Feb. (Pseudonym E. Waldo Hunter)
Shottle Bop, Unknown, Feb.
Poker Face, Astounding Science Fiction, March
Microcosmic God, Astounding Science Fiction, April
The Haunt, Unknown, April
Nightmare Island, Unknown, June (Pseudonym E. Waldo Hunter)
Artnan Process, Astounding Science Fiction, June
Purple Light, Astounding Science Fiction, June (Pseudonym E. Waldo Hunter)
Yesterday Was Monday, Unknown, June
Biddiver, Astounding Science Fiction, Aug.
The Golden Egg, Unknown, Aug.

** While this is the most complete list of Sturgeon's professional works yet published, it makes no claim to being definitive and additions and corrections are welcomed.*

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Two Percent Inspiration, Astounding Science Fiction, Oct.
Brat, Unknown, Dec.

1942

Medusa, Astounding Science Fiction, Feb.
The Jumper, Unknown, Aug.
Hag Seleen, (with James H. Beard), Unknown, Dec.

1943

Green-Eyed Monster, Unknown, June
The Bones (with James H. Beard) Unknown, Aug.

1944

Killdozer, Astounding Science Fiction, Nov.

1946

Memorial, Astounding Science Fiction, April
Chromium Helmut, Astounding Science Fiction, June
Mewhu's Jet, Astounding Science Fiction, Nov.

1947

Cellmate, Weird Tales, Jan.
Blabbermouth, Amazing Stories, Feb.
Maturity, Astounding Science Fiction, Feb.
Tiny and the Monster, Astounding Science Fiction, May
Bianca's Hands, Argosy (British), May
The Sky Was Full of Ships, Thrilling Wonder Stories, June
Largo, Fantastic Adventures, July
Unite and Conquer, Astounding Science Fiction, Oct.
Thunder and Roses, Astounding Science Fiction, Nov.

1948

Deadly Ratio, Weird Tales, Jan.
There is No Defense, Astounding Science Fiction, Feb.
The Professor's Teddy Bear, Weird Tales, March
Abreaction, Weird Tales, July
Memory, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Aug.
The Purple Light, Senior Scholastic, Sept.
That Low, Famous Fantastic Mysteries, Oct.
The Perfect Host, Weird Tales, Nov.
The Love of Heaven, Astounding Science Fiction, Nov.
Maturity, (Lengthened and Revised) Without Sorcery, Prime Press
**Wham Bop,* Varsity
**Smoke,* Calling All Boys
**The Clock,* Calling All Boys
The Graveyard Reader, The Graveyard Reader (edited by Groff Conklin), Ballantine Books

1949

Messenger, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Feb.
The Martian and the Moron, Weird Tales, March
Prodigy, Astounding Science Fiction, April
**Die, Maestro, Die,* Dime Detective, May
**Scars,* Zane Grey's Western Magazine, May
Minority Report, Astounding Science Fiction, June
One Foot and the Grave, Weird Tales, Sept.

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What Dead Men Tell, Astounding Science Fiction, Nov.
The Hurkle is a Happy Beast, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Fall
**Well Spiced,* Zane Grey's Western Magazine, (No Date)

1950

Dreaming Jewels, Fantastic Adventures, Feb.
The Stars are the Styx, Galaxy Science Fiction, Nov.
Dreaming Jewels, (rewritten) Greenberg: Publishers

1951

Rule of Three, Galaxy Science Fiction, Jan.
"Shadow, Shadow, on the Wall", Imagination, Feb.
Last Laugh (reprinted as *Special Aptitude*), Other Worlds, March
Ghost of a Chance, Suspense, Spring (Reprint: *Green-Eyed Monster*)
The Dianetics Question, (article) Marvel Science Stories, May
Make Room for Me, Fantastic Adventures, May
The Traveling Crag, Fantastic Adventures, July
Excalibur and the Atom, Fantastic Adventures, Aug.
The Incubi of Parallel X, Planet Stories, Sept.

1952

Never Underestimate, If, March
Baby is Three, Galaxy Science Fiction, Oct.
The Sex Opposite, Fantastic, Fall

1953

Saucer of Loneliness, Galaxy Science Fiction, Feb.
The Way Home, Amazing Stories, May
The World Well Lost, Universe Science Fiction, June
And My Fear is Great, Beyond Fantasy Fiction, July
The Wages of Synergy, Startling Stories, Aug.
The Dark Room, Fantastic Adventures, Aug.
Talent, Beyond Fantasy Fiction, Sept.
The Touch of Your Hand, Galaxy Science Fiction, Sept.
A Way of Thinking, Amazing Stories, Nov.
The Silken Swift, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Nov.
Mr. Costello, Hero, Galaxy Science Fiction, Dec.
The Clinic, Star Science Fiction Stories #2, Ballatine Books
More Than Human, (Contains *Baby is Three* plus *The Fabulous Idiot* and *Morality,* the latter two being original novelets connected to the central story) Farrar, Straus and Young with Ballantine Books
The Music, E Pluribus Unicorn, Abelard Press

1954

The Education of Drusilla Strange, Galaxy Science Fiction, March
Granny Won't Knit, Galaxy Science Fiction, May
The Golden Helix, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Summer
**Cactus Dance,* Luke Short's Western Magazine, Oct.-Dec.

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To Here and the Easel, Star Short Novels, Ballantine Books

1955

When You're Smiling, Galaxy Science Fiction, Jan.
Who?, Galaxy Science Fiction, March
Hurricane Trio, Galaxy Science Fiction, April
Riddle of Ragnorak, (with Don Ward) Fantastic Universe, June
Twink, Galaxy Science Fiction, Aug.
So Near the Darkness, Fantastic Universe, Nov.
The [Widget], the [Wadget] and Boff, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction (two parts), Nov. & Dec.
**Bright Segment,* Caviar, Ballantine Books

1956

Won't You Walk?, Astounding Science Fiction, Jan.
**Half-Way Tree Murder,* The Saint's Mystery Magazine, March
Skills of Xanadu, Galaxy Science Fiction, July
Claustrophile, Galaxy Science Fiction, Aug.
Fear is a Business, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Aug.
**Dead Dames Don't Dial,* The Saint's Mystery Magazine, Aug.
The Other Man, Galaxy Science Fiction, Sept.
And Now the News . . . , The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Dec.
**I, Libertine,* (a novel written under the pen name of Frederick R. Ewing) Ballantine Books

1957

The Girl Had Guts, Venture Science Fiction, Jan.
The Other Celia, Galaxy Science Fiction, March
Affair With a Green Monkey, Venture Science Fiction, May
On Hand . . . Off Hand (Book Reviews) Venture Science Fiction, July and Sept.
The Pod in the Barrier, Galaxy Science Fiction, Sept.
It Opens the Sky, Venture Science Fiction, Nov.

1958

On Hand . . . Off Hand (Book Reviews), Venture Science Fiction, Jan., March, May and July
A Touch of Strange, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Jan.
The Comedian's Children, Venture Science Fiction, May
Memorial to Henry Kuttner, (obituary), Venture Science Fiction, July
To Marry Medusa, Galaxy Science Fiction, Aug.
The Cosmic Rape, Dell paperback (*To Marry Medusa* expanded)
**A Crime for Llewellyn,* A Touch of Strange, Doubleday

1959

The Man Who Lost the Sea, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Oct.

1960

Need, Beyond, Avon

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Like Young, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, March
Venus Plus X, Pyramid

1961

Science Briefs (non-fiction), If, March
**How To Kill Aunty,* Mike Shayne's Mystery Magazine, March
Tandy's Story, Galaxy Science Fiction, April
A Science Faction Story, (column), If, May
**Assault and Little Sister,* Mike Shayne's Mystery Magazine, July
The BEM Called Wendigo, (column) If, July
Monoliths and Miracles, (column), If, Sept.
A Function for Fable, (book reviews) National Review, Sept. 23
Penny Wise and Fashion Foolish, (column), If, Nov.
Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, (novel based on motion picture of the same name) Pyramid, June
Some of Your Blood, Ballantine Books

1962

From Plynck to Planck, (column), If, Jan.
Alexander Graham Bell and Me, (column) If, March
Of Times and Tithes, (book reviews) National Review, April 24
—And Besides Those Bombs—, (column) If, May
The Other If, (article) If, July
Uncle Sam's Time Machine, (column) If, July
Just Westing, (column) If, Sept.
The Worlds of Science, (special book review) If, Sept.

FIRST PRINTINGS OF HARD-COVER AND PAPERBACK EDITIONS

WITHOUT SORCERY, Prime Press, 355 Pages, $3.00, 1948. Contains an introduction by Ray Bradbury and the following tales: *The Ultimate Egoist, It, Poker Face, Shottle Bop, Artnan Process, Memorial, Ether Breather, Butyl and the Breather, Brat, Two Percent Inspiration, Cargo, Maturity* and *Microcosmic God.*

THE DREAMING JEWELS, Greenberg: Publishers, New York, 217 pages, $2.50, 1950. A novel.

E PLURIBUS UNICORN, Abelard Press, New York, 275 pages, $2.75, 1953. Contains *Essay on Sturgeon* by Groff Conklin and the following tales: *The Silken Swift, The Professor's Teddy-Bear, Bianca's Hands, Saucer of Loneliness, The World Well Lost, It Wasn't Syzgy, The Music, Scars, Fluffy, The Sex Opposite, Die, Maestro, Die!, Cellmate,* and *A Way of Thinking.* An appendix of *Science Fiction and Fantasy by Theodore Sturgeon in Anthologies* (Up to 1953) is included. Original title of *It Wasn't Syzgy* was *The Deadly Ratio.*

MORE THAN HUMAN, Farrar, Straus & Young, New York, 233 pages, $2.00, 1953. Contains *The Fabulous Idiot, Baby is Three* and *Morality* as a unified whole.

A WAY HOME, selected and with an introduction by Groff Conklin,

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Funk and Wagnalls, 333 pages, $3.50, 1955. Contains *Unite and Conquer, Special Aptitude, Mewhu's Jet, Hurricane Trio, ". . . And My Fear is Great . . .", Minority Report, The Hurkle is a Happy Beast, Thunder and Roses, Bulkhead, Tiny and the Monster, A Way Home. Bulkhead* originally published as *Who?; Special Aptitude* as *The Last Laugh.*

CAVIAR, Ballantine Books, New York, $2.00, 168 pages, 1955. Contains *Bright Segment, Microcosmic God, Ghost of a Chance (The Green-Eyed Monster), Prodigy, Medusa, Blabbermouth, Shadow, Shadow on the Wall* and *Twink.*

I, LIBERTINE, published under the pen name of Frederick R. Ewing, Ballantine Books, New York, paperback edition 35¢, 151 pages, 1956.

A TOUCH OF STRANGE, Doubleday, New York, 262 pages, $2.95, 1958. Contains *The Pod in the Barrier, A Crime for Llewellyn, The Touch of Your Hand, Affair with a Green Monkey, Mr. Costello, Hero; The Girl Had Guts, The Other Celia, It Opens the Sky, A Touch of Strange.*

THE COSMIC RAPE, Dell, New York, 160 pages, 35¢, 1958. Short novel.

ALIENS 4, Avon Publications, New York, 224 pages, 35¢, 1959. Contains *Killdozer!, Cactus Dance, The Comedian's Children* and *The [Widget], The [Wadget], and Boff.*

BEYOND, Avon Book Division, The Hearst Corp., New York, 157 pages, 35¢, 1960. Contains *Need, Abreaction, Nightmare Island, Largo, The Bones* and *Like Young.*

VENUS PLUS X, Pyramid Books, 160 pages, 35¢, 1960. A novel.

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, Pyramid Books, New York, 159 pages, 35¢, 1961. An adaptation from motion picture.

SOME OF YOUR BLOOD, Ballantine Books, New York, 143 pages, 35¢, 1961. A novel.

SELECTED MATERIAL ON THEODORE STURGEON

Theodore Sturgeon: No More Than Human by Sam Moskowitz, Amazing Stories, Feb., 1962. Analysis of his work and position in the science fiction field.

Author, Author: Theodore Sturgeon: Autobiographical sketch by Theodore Sturgeon with alphabetical list of stories and reprintings up until 1950. *The Fanscient,* Spring, 1950.

The Vorpel Pen: Theodore Sturgeon, Chapter 11, In Search of Wonder by Damon Knight, Advent: Publishers, Chicago, 1956.

Why So Much Syzygy? by Theodore Sturgeon, Skyhook, Summer, 1953. An exposition on sex in his science fiction.

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Robin Sturgeon is ten, which makes him—by one year—our youngest contributor. We are not very familiar with the hobbies, plans, etc., of Sturgeon fils, but we can say on good authority that he has never been married and looks just like his father, though minus beard. This article was originally written as a school composition, but the chance to use it for our Special Sturgeon Issue was not to be missed. We look forward to publishing more of Mr. R. Sturgeon's writings in the future.

Martian Mouse

by Robin Sturgeon

This is an animal I'd like very much for a pet. It is a certain perculiar animal that lives on Mars. He has a mouse-like face, ears the like of a horse, a slim body and powerful hind legs which he jumps from peak to peak of Martian mountains. He eats well . . . *pets!* Cats, dogs, rabbits, and even horses of every kind. (Depending on the Martian Mouse)

These are the things that usually happens to your pet. No. 1: He (or she) got *mushed* under the wheels of an auto; No. 2: Fell off a cliff; No. 3: (last but not least, no sir!) The pet was taken captive by the Martian mouse who made a very good meal of it. You will probably think, "why do you want such a nasty pet?" And I answer, "because it would keep the dogs of the neighboorhood away from here!" The end. P. S.! I hope your pet has a happy ending!

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Evelyn E. Smith, from whom our ace agent, Mr. Pettifogle, finally extracted some biographical information with his handy pocket thumb-screw, insists her reluctance is based on a "depressingly uneventful life." Pointing to Theodore Thomas (". . . science-columnist and-lecturer, pater familias, patent attorney, scuba-diver," etc. [THE TEST, F&SF, April, 1962]), she says that "The only area in which we coincide is in never having tried out a deathray-gun on passers-by . . . although I would, if I had one." The author of this chilling statement is a deceptively mild-mannered and attractive gentle-lady, a native New Yorker, full-time free-lance writer of "mostly articles, good and bloodthirsty ones." She went on to inform the by-now-popeyed Pettifogle, that she was responsible for book, lyrics, and fingerprints on the music, of a "stirring musical-comedy version of DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, [which], after nearly being produced off-Broadway (Maine, in fact), failed to arouse excitement, even in my agent . . . " Miss Smith is well-known for her careful and humorous study of aliens—in the SF, rather than the McCarran-Walter, sense—and in THEY ALSO SERVE she adds to this a reminder, well-known to empire-builders of all ages, that misfits at home may often prove heroes abroad. ("After reading the above," *Miss S. comments,* "I feel I should go out and commit a crime to ginger things up. If I do, I'll send you a telegram right away." *The telegram has failed to arrive, but we are watching our tabloid newspaper with ill-concealed interest.*

THEY ALSO SERVE

by Evelyn E. Smith

"NOW, REMEMBER," THE CAPtain told the young officers, "you're not here to study the planet or the natives; a two-man expedition

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can't afford to fool around with such nonsense. All you're here for is to get prozius stones, understand?"

"We understand, sir." Lieutenant Garnett's handsome face was pale but composed. Young Morson's lower lip was trembling.

"Prozius stones are of the utmost importance to Earth," the captain said defensively. "They're used in science and—and medicine." And, of course, in the jewel trade, but it seemed needless to mention that.

"What did Earth do before Persiper was discovered?" Morson asked.

"It suffered," the captain said curtly, aware that, since the existence of Persiper had been known for only half a century, and the potency of the prozius for even less than that, this gave Earth a long period of martyrdom.

"Persiper looks like such a *nice* planet, too!" Morson wailed.

Persiper did look like a nice planet. Not only did it have Earth-type gravity and atmosphere, but it was equipped with rolling green hills, colorful flowers, blue skies . . . all that sort of thing. A pretty, pleasant-seeming place, but all of them knew that appearances were most decidedly deceptive.

The captain felt a tweak of guilt. "Oh, I don't mean that you have to plunge in blind. It won't hurt to learn a bit about the natives before you try to make contact. See if you can figure out what keeps going wrong with the rapport." Though, if seven expeditions had been unable to find out what changed a seemingly courteous people into wanton killers, he doubted that these two youths would be able to do any better.

"How can we learn about the natives?" Morson demanded. "Who's to tell us? Dead men. . . ." His voice broke.

"Jimmy!" Garnett said sternly. Garnett's family was Navy, so at least he had some idea of correct behavior. There was good stuff in young Garnett, the captain thought; pity there was so much bad stuff along with it.

Morson gulped. "Sorry, Clyde."

"You know all the expeditions left records," Garnett chided. "Surely you looked at the microfilms on the ship."

Morson turned pink. Of course he hadn't, the captain thought; that would smack of too much like efficiency. Aloud he said, "We've packed them along with your gear, in case you wanted to do a bit of last-minute cramming."

"Good of you, sir," Garnett said.

This was the first-two man expedition to Persiper. The previous seven had set out with a full complement of scientists and social scientists and elaborate equipment. Although their primary aim had also been to collect prozius stones, they had also sought

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knowledge. However, the records they left behind were curiously . . . not so much inadequate as uneven. There were very comprehensive grammatical and linguistic studies of the native language. There were geological and botanical reports that were almost as thorough. But there was little about the natives themselves—a few pictures, enough to show that they were humanoid and probably mammalian; enough sociological data to show that they had a non-mechanical culture. But nothing to indicate what made them tick.

And there was no way of querying the investigators about the spottiness of their reports, because they were all dead. However, prozius stones had been found among their effects, which was why, although the Earth Government had given up any more *expensive* attempts to unravel the secret of Persiper, it had not given up entirely.

"Well," the captain said with pinchbeck heartiness, "the ship'll be back in a twelvemonth or so. I'll expect to find you two doing a thriving business, hey?"

Morson's always-meagre self-control departed him. "Bleached bones!" he cried. "That's all you really expect to find, bleached bones . . ."

Since this was true, there was no tactful answer. "Well, I'll be seeing you," the captain tried to say, but the lie stuck in his throat. "Good luck," he finally managed to choke out.

The two lieutenants saluted. "*Te morituri* and all that," Garnett observed.

The captain scrambled hastily into the flyer.

Back on the ship, the doctor waited in the captain's cabin, glass in hand. "It's plain murder; that's what it is," he said accusingly. "Seven expeditions have vanished here, large, fully-staffed expeditions, practically colonies. What do you expect those two miserable boys to do?"

"Vanish also." The captain poured himself a stiff drink. "No sense wasting more than a minimal number of men. And those two are particularly expendable."

"Young Garnett is Admiral Garnett's nephew, isn't he? And Morson is the senator's son? Put-up job, isn't it? Get rid of an embarrassment, two embarrassments, and no questions asked. Doesn't always pay to have good connections, does it?"

The captain swallowed his drink and poured another. "Don't be an idiot! It's just that . . . I'm sure the admiral and the senator would like the boys to die heroes' deaths."

"So am I," the doctor said.

"Somebody's got to do the job. I picked them myself; it has nothing whatsoever to do with their connections. Now, let's talk about something else."

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The seventh Persiperian expedition had consisted of over a hundred men, women and, as an inevitable result of the long voyage out, children, who had lived in prefabricated luxury until their demise. Now the elaborate installations were gone, dismantled and removed by the ship that had taken away the bodies. All that was left was a small space in the forest; the lush vegetation of Persiper had overgrown the rest of the land the Earthmen had cleared. Its mild, rosy sun bathed grass and flowers and the encroaching bushes in radiant light. Birdlike things sang in the trees; butterflylike things twittered in the shrubbery. Except for the huge pile of equipment the flyer had left, there was no sign of civilization. One could suppose the planet to be uninhabited. One knew better.

Morson cast himself upon a carton and wept. "It's suicide, just plain suicide!"

"Murder, you mean," Garnett corrected, "because suicide implies volition, and we certainly didn't ask for this assignment. But cheer up, Jimmy, being in the Space Service is a fate worse than death, anyway."

"I've often thought that, myself. But right now the Navy doesn't look all that bad." He began to sob again.

For a moment Garnett was exasperated. Then he was ashamed. Jimmy couldn't help being more sensitive than other people. Garnett himself was pretty high-strung, but he had learned self-control. Being the stronger and older, he must be the leader rather than the reproacher. Besides, Jimmy had joined the Navy because of him; he had a moral responsibility.

He tried to sound hearty and distracting. "We've got to get started putting up the prefab, if we want a roof over our heads tonight. It'll be dark in a few hours." He began unpacking the house, and, after a moment, Morson rose and joined him.

Although the prefab was large enough to accommodate a whole family of colonists, it could easily be put up by two men in two hours. No engineering skill was required; the building was divided into a number of components, each neatly packed in a separate box with a label to show where it belonged. "This is the part I like!" Morson exclaimed, glistening-eyed, as he carefully unwrapped a portion of their future home. "Oh, if only life could always be this way!"

Back in the bushes Cmirral and Fluurim watched the Earthmen attentively. "They don't look all that obnoxious," Fluurim said cautiously. He was young. This was his first permanent association, as well as his first official assignment, and he was apprehen-

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sive. Cmirral, although much sought after, was notoriously hard to get along with. Still, Fluurim kept reminding himself when things got rough, Cmirral had *chosen* Fluurim as his partner.

"Don't judge by initial appearances, Fluurim; everything they do seems harmless at first. But they're up to no good." Having been watcher for several earlier human expeditions, Cmirral knew what the score was.

Fluurim squinted at the peculiar construction. "All they're doing is building a house; that is, putting it together, like a child's educational toy." Too late, he heard his *gaffe*. He could feel himself green furiously. Cmirral didn't say anything, but he *looked*. Surely we know each other well enough by now, Fluurim thought. But did one ever really get to know Cmirral?

"What they're doing is, of course, uncreative," Fluurim said nervously, "but there's no outright aesthetic violation, especially if you consider that their standards may be different from ours."

"Standards are absolute!" Cmirral snapped.

"There are two schools of thought on that subject," Fluurim declared stoutly. Then he backtracked a little: "And one must allow for ignorance."

"One *might*," Cmirral conceded; "there's no *must* involved. However, don't be deluded. They always begin in such apparent innocence. They build their homes; they settle down; then they become unpleasant and we are forced to exterminate them."

Fluurim didn't ask the nature of the unpleasantnesses committed; anything capitally unpleasant was axiomatically unspeakable. Besides, he had already gotten a fair idea from detergency gossip. "Did we ever explain what our laws were before we killed the aliens for violating them?" he asked.

Cmirral emitted a hissing sound between his teeth. "We didn't ask them to come to our planet. We have never made any effort to encourage relations with any of the other so-called civilized species; we're too different from any of them. A live-and-let-live policy is possible only if they stay on their planets and we stay on ours. If they insist on coming here, they must abide by our laws, whether they know them or not."

He's a difficult one, Fluurim thought admiringly. He's a real challenge.

Garnett and Morson spent a comfortable first night on Persiper. It was such a relief to be away from the ship, from the hostile forces they had seen and felt for so many months that for nine hours it was easy to forget they were surrounded by unseen, unfelt hostilities. However, morning

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had to come, and, with it, oblivion had to go.

Morosely they set about their duties. "According to the records," Garnett observed, as he fitted a knocked-down chair together, "it's up to us to make the first approach. The natives don't seem to appear unless they're hailed."

"We don't have to hail them today, do we?" Morson asked anxiously. "We've only just got here. Besides, it's Sunday."

Garnett rubbed the back of his neck. "Uncle Mortimer always says a space officer's first duty on an alien planet is to consolidate his base. So probably we ought to get the place fixed up a little before we try to get in touch with the indigenous life forms. Makes a better impression on them; besides, it gives us a solid basis of emotional security to operate from. . . ."

"You don't have to convince me, Clyde; I'm sold! Oh, I do so hate meeting new people . . . even if they aren't exactly people!"

"I don't like it any more than you do, Jimmy, but that's what we're here for." Garnett gave the chair a final thump and set it upright, where it stood as inelegant as it was utilitarian. "Come now," he said with false heartiness, "no time for brooding. There's tons of unpacking to be done!"

Morson behaved well enough for a few hours, then, after burrowing fruitlessly through all the cartons, he threw a tantrum. "Wouldn't you know, no drapes! Such slipshod stowage!"

"I daresay they expected us to pig it without drapes. Figured that in our situation the amenities wouldn't matter. Not that they care much for amenities. The *décor* on that ship!" Garnett closed his eyes and shuddered.

"Well, I refuse to spend my last months in squalor!" Morson declared. "If I must die, let there be drapes around me."

"A noble sentiment," Garnett said drily. "Do you propose to create drapes out of thin air?"

Morson sat down on a box. It buckled a little, for, though he was not precisely plump, neither could he be quite described as slender, particularly in the area that made contact with the box. "You'll think of something, Clyde."

"As a matter of fact," Garnett murmured, trying not to sound complacent. "There was something in the films about a native plant a lot like flax. If we can find some, I'll try my hand at throwing together a spinning wheel and making the stuff into yarn. Used to do a lot of that kind of thing up at Woody Grove." He sighed, remembering the happy days before he had felt called upon—largely by the suspension of his allowance—to follow the family tradition.

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"And I'll build a loom and weave the yarn into cloth! I learned how on the Island! We can make couch covers and everything!"

Garnett looked dubious. "I guess it'll be all right if we listen to the tapes all the while we work, so we'll be absorbing the language. That way we won't be wasting time."

Morson's light tenor rose to a whinny. "*Wasting* time! How can you say that?"

"Oh, *I* wouldn't, but the Service would. From their point of view, making drapes and couch covers would be wasting time, and, hence, a violation of duty." Garnett smiled ruefully. "I know they've left us here to die, but—well—" he shrugged—"my uncle's an admiral, and so was my grandfather, and my grandfather was a commander. Navy's in my blood, I guess."

Morson's round face shone with incomprehension. "I must say I don't quite understand, Clyde," he confessed, "but, just the same, I do admire you for it."

Since the climate of Persiper was so mild the Earthmen worked out of doors a good deal, thus providing convenient observation and free entertainment for their hidden hosts. By the time they had finished spinning the yarn and had started in to dye it, there was a small crowd of lurkers filling the nearby bushes. Cmirral disapproved. "After all, the Earthmen haven't been convicted of any crime as yet."

"We all know they're going to commit something horrid," Tutkin retorted, "so all they're doing is anticipating." He peered eagerly through the foliage that screened then from the Earthmen's dwelling. The house no longer looked alien. It's become familiar by now, Fluurim thought; so many weeks of watching. . . . And he sighed inwardly, because, though he was interested in his job, even more he wanted to be back in the fragile, hand-carved tower, working on his sonnet sequence while Cmirral fashioned his ivory figurines.

"Look at the lovely pitchers and bowls they've been making out of mere clay from the riverbank," Boorg, Tutkin's partner, murmured. "How can anyone who created such pure sensitive shapes be all bad?"

"Probably they're not *all* bad," Tutkin said, "just mostly." He pressed close against the leaves. "Wonder how they got that particularly haunting shade of violet. They couldn't have made it out of our vegetation alone; they must have added some substance they brought with them. I've never gotten such a color myself."

"How could a barbarian excel you in your own art?" Boorg asked sarcastically.

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But Tutkin didn't rise to the bait. "Primitive art is often inspired." Tentatively, he added, "It would be a shame for their secret to die with them. . . ."

The Persiperians looked at each other. "We can't very well go up to them, ask them how they got their color, and then kill them!" Fluurim said flatly.

"Why not?" Tutkin demanded. "The violet will have committed no crime."

But everyone knew art belonged to its creator, and he had the right to choose whether or not it would die with him.

"What a pretty garden they've fashioned," gentle Vanzt murmured. "Lovingly transported our own flora from the forest. How the little flowers are thriving! Surely they would not flourish like that for beings who were essentially evil."

The others exchanged smiles, for they did not hold with Vanzt that "plants know." "All Earthmen are evil," Tutkin declared sweepingly, "plants or no plants, violet or no violet."

"These two seem different to me," Arvis observed. He and his partner were not unsolicited bystanders, like all the others except Cmirral and his partner, but the official night-watchers, so his opinion held value.

Cmirral scratched his crest. "To me, too . . . a little," he admitted reluctantly.

Stern, but just, Fluurim thought.

"Perhaps it is because there are only two," Cmirral went on, "but they do appear to be paying more attention to the essential graces of living than the earlier ones. However, that could result from a combination of random factors rather than the existence of a substratum of sensibility in the species."

"They're probably trying to lull us into a sense of false security!" Tutkin snapped. But it was obvious to all that if the terrestrials had enough perception and delicacy to realize that such a course could lull the Persiperians into a sense of false security, then they would have too much perception and delicacy to be capable of criminal behavior in the first place.

There was a crashing in the bushes. Xefter, Tutkin's oldest, scrambled out, giggling. Tutkin flinched and said, "Oh, no!" in a low tone.

One could feel sorry for the man; it was, indeed, a sore affliction to be cursed with so graceless a cub. But such was one of the inevitable hazards of perpetuating the race. Although Fluurim was not one of those extremists who held it preferable to let the race die out exquisitely rather than to continue grossly, nonetheless he was glad he himself was not yet of breeding age. It was vulgar, he knew, but he couldn't

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help wondering what Cmirral's offspring were like; they would, of course, be too young yet to be allowed public appearance and so would be still kept in the cellar with their dam.

"Guess where I've been, fellows!" Xefter cried. "I sneaked around the back of the Earthmen's house, and I *looked* in the windows!"

There was a chorus of outraged cries. Fluurim had never before seen Cmirral so angry; he was truly magnificent in his wrath. "Xefter, you—you *peeper!* Your behavior is vulgar; it's vile; it's vicious!"

He took a deep breath and turned to Tutkin. "I regret that I had to reprimand your cub, but this is a planetary affair."

"Reprimand him," Tutkin said. "Kill him if you like."

To everyone's further horror, Xefter began to weep. "If I'd had a proper family life," he bawled, "I would've had the rough edges rubbed off me!"

Tutkin went rigid with embarrassment. "If you're going to indulge in crude emotional displays you'd better go home. It's nearly time anyway."

"Aaaah, Dad, let me stay. I promise to display only publicly-proper emotion. Look, I'm smiling!" He grinned from ears to ears.

Tutkin grunted. The cub appeared to take this for consent. "Can I ask a question?" he said brightly.

"No."

"The young should be allowed to indulge their thirst for knowledge," Boorg remarked, "else how are they to learn." Being Tutkin's partner, he had, of course, certain familiarity rights. As a rule, however, these did not extend to offspring.

"You'll be sorry," Tutkin said. "All right, Xefter, ask away."

"If peeping is wrong, then what are you-all doing out here?"

Tutkin looked triumphantly at Boorg.

Cmirral cleared his throat. "This post is *officially* watching the Earthmen, which is quite another thing," he declared in the voice of authority. And, before Xefter could point out that his parents were not part of the post, he added, "Also, we take pains to keep at a discreet distance. You—you were practically *mingling.*"

"For shame!" several said.

Xefter mumbled something inaudible and scuffed a hoof in the grass.

Fluurim could restrain himself no longer. "What was the Earthmen's house like inside?" he asked eagerly.

Xefter brightened. "Really charming! The room I saw was done in a muted shade of blue-green that's rather unusual at first but *grows* on you. And the other colors are cleverly arranged to

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lead up to it in a sweeping ascencion of tone!"

"How I should like to see it!" Fluurim cried, carried away.

The others looked at him and then at Xefter. "Corruption is more than a simple misdemeanor," Cmirral said softly. "And the sins of the cub. . . ."

"Xefter," Tutkin snapped, "it's home-time for you!"

"Aaaah, Dad—"

"You know it's the hour for you to feed your female parent," Tutkin whispered. Although he was audible, the others affected not to hear. What had Cmirral ever seen in such a boorish fellow, Fluurim wondered . . . for, although naturally one didn't talk about such things, he knew Tutkin had once been Cmirral's companion. Way back at the time of the Second Alien Expedition it had been; Tutkin had taken part in the alien watch then; and, because Xefter the ungainly had been born not long after the disposal, Tutkin had blamed his affliction on the lingering terrestrial auras. That was why he was so down on Earthmen.

"Home-time, Xefter," Tutkin repeated.

"Aaah, it won't hurt the old cow to skip a meal!" Xefter said, in his normal speaking voice.

The air was still with shock. Suddenly Xefter lost his bravado and turned vivid green. "All right," he mumbled, "I'll go; I'll go." He left clumsily, crashing through the bushes, muttering ". . . always doing something wrong. Because nobody ever loved me, that's why."

There were small *moues* of distaste.

"When we have such among us," Boorg observed, "Who are we to judge the Earthmen?" Not one of them could look at the others.

By the time Garnett and Morson had been on Persiper for close to four months, they had succeeded in making the prefab almost livable. They had torn down some of the interior walls to make one vast main room. The remaining walls they painted, except for the dining alcove, which they papered with star maps soaked in tea to make them look antique. The floors were covered with thick rugs of native moss pressed in a process suggested by *The Universal Craftsman* . . . of which they had brought along two full years in microfilm. Not only had they softened the stern lines of the utility furniture with tender-hued paint and plump, yielding cushions, but they had hand-fashioned several pieces out of the native woods—which worked easily and were distinctive in appearance. They thought of leaving a before and after article behind for *The Craftsman* to publish posthumously, but what was the use; the Navy would never forward it.

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"Oh, I could be so happy here," Morson sighed, "with nobody to poke and pry and pester and persecute, if only it weren't for that sword hanging over our heads . . . Clyde," he said hopefully, "we still haven't seen any sign of a native. Do you think maybe they all died of a plague or something, and we're all alone on the planet? Oh, Clyde, wouldn't that be *wonderful!*"

Garnett shook his sleek head. "Initial contact always came from our side. Apparently their code demands that we make the first gesture."

"And then, having been properly introduced, they'll kill us," Morson said dully. "Some code. I'd rather be rude and alive."

"They couldn't have done the killing right after the introductions," Garnett pointed out, "or the other expeditions wouldn't have been able to leave any records. Something happened after an initially favorable connection, something faulty in the rapport."

Morson made a face. "I hate the idea of establishing rapport. Seems so *pushy! Must* we?"

"We're not here on a holiday, Jimmy; we're here for prozius and/or die in the attempt."

"But—but, Clyde—" Morson's voice sank to a whisper "—that's the worst; we can't just step up to the natives, introduce ourselves, and *ask* for prozius stones. The records say they—they're like gallstones, grow inside a person. How could you have the gall to step up and ask somebody for his *gallstones!*"

"It's not quite as bad as all that," Garnett said resolutely. "If you'd read further, you'd know that having them removed is a frequent and fashionable operation. They keep the stones in beautiful blown-glass bottles afterwards, as mementoes."

"They're even more uncivilized than terrestrials, aren't they?"

"We-ell, prozius stones are prettier than gallstones. The ugliness lies in the origin, and the Persiperians' aesthetic approach may be different."

Morson gave a skeptical sniff.

"Now," Garnett went on, "let's have a final brush-up on the language. You be a native; I'll be me." He stepped back a few paces and tried to look moss green. "Greetings, brother," he began in Persiperian, "we of Earth offer you the hand of fellowship and friendship. . . ."

Morson clutched desperately at his arm. "Oh, Clyde, isn't there some way we could just keep on the way we have been? Maybe the natives won't bother us if we don't bother them. Maybe. . . ."

Garnett disengaged himself gently. "You know we can't, Jimmy. It would be wrong. Besides, the ship will come back in a year. Even if the natives didn't bother us, the Navy would."

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"We could wait until, say, ten months have gone by. That would give us over six more months together. Oh, Clyde, do say yes!"

Garnett was tempted. But there were too many pitfalls. They might not be able to establish contact right away. And, if they didn't have any prozius stones by the time the ship came back, they might just as well have been killed by the natives.

"Well, couldn't we wait another month before trying to make contact? One measly month, Clyde . . . please? *Please?* There were tears in Morson's big blue eyes.

"Oh, all right," Garnett said. After all, soon they would both be dead.

The month stretched into two and then began on a third. Meanwhile, back in the bushes, the natives were getting impatient. Not so much that they were bored—they found the Earthmen's activities endlessly fascinating—but that they were bewildered . . . a little hurt, even. "Know what I think?" Arvis said. "They've just come here for a—a vacation! They never had any intention of getting in touch with us at all; just wanted a congenial atmosphere to work in."

"Why, the amount they've been saving on craft materials probably more than pays for the cost of the trip!" Tutkin declared angrily.

There were petulant murmurs.

"That would be an awfully snotty thing to do," Xefter observed. "Using somebody else's planet without so much as how-do-you-do to them."

"Why should they say 'how-do-you-do' to us?" Vanzt asked. "We haven't made any attempt to communicate with them. We never made any attempt at communication with the other ones, not in the deeper sense of the word."

"Look," Cmirral snapped, "our objective is not to make the Earthmen's acquaintance, but to get rid of them with all deliberate propriety."

Oh, Cmirral, Fluurim thought, how can one so noble still be so pig-headed?

"I want to make their acquaintance," Boorg suddenly declared. "I have a feeling that, if given a chance, they may be basically capable of refinement."

"All you want is to get a closer look at that kiln of theirs," Cmirral said between his teeth.

"Nothing wrong with that," Boorg replied. "Tutkin admits freely that he'd like to know how they made their colors, and I'll bet young Fluurim here is just itching for a look at the library."

Fluurim couldn't help greening. Cmirral gave him a reproachful glance.

"I move we hail the Earthmen," Vanzt proposed. "Since this is our planet, it's not really ill-bred for us to speak first."

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Cmirral stirred restlessly. Fluurim looked up at him with great deference. "Could that be considered as a non-invasion of privacy?" he asked, trying not to overdo it.

Cmirral hesitated. "Strictly speaking," he said at last, "They don't have privacy rights on someone else's planet, not when they came uninvited in the first place. However, if we tacitly recognized their existence by approaching them first, we'd be handing them a significant moral advantage. If it came to a showdown, they'd be able to invoke the hospitality laws, which could mean a long court battle before we were permitted to annihilate them."

"Don't you think it's better to risk a court battle than to run the risk of spending our whole lives here?" Fluurim asked wistfully. "I want to finish my sequence, and I know you're anxious to get at those bas reliefs. What's more, we'll miss the Vernal Redecoration if this stretches out, and I had my heart set on our winning the prize together."

It took Cmirral even longer to answer this time. "I can't let personal considerations keep me from doing what is right."

"But nothing would be keeping you from doing the right thing. You'd just be approaching it at an accelerated pace, that's all." He took Cmirral's upper right arm and gave him a winning smile. "Now, let's go hail the aliens, shall we?"

"Oh, very well," Cmirral said.

"My god, Clyde," Morson called, as he looked up from the dinner dishes—there wasn't enough spare power in the packs for a dishwasher—"they're coming!"

"Who? The ship? But it hasn't been even seven months yet." Garnett raced to the kitchen window. A group of moss-green humanoids was approaching them. "Oh, natives!" he said.

"Why do you sound so relieved? Are you so bored with my company that even a native looks better?"

But Garnett had no time either to soothe or reproach his junior. He was too full of a surprising gladness. The matter of meeting the natives had now been taken out of his hands. Furthermore, now that the terrestrials had, in effect, forced the natives to make the first move, it seemed to Garnett that his side had scored somewhat of a point . . . in their own terms, at least. "Let's go out and meet them!" he cried, buttoning his tunic and brushing back his hair.

"I don't care to make their acquaintance!" Morson flung a dish on the floor. Since it was of plastic naval issue rather than their own ceramic contriving, it rattled rather than shattered . . . and so failed as an emotional outlet.

"Oh, Jimmy," Garnett said wearily, "won't you ever grow up?"

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"What's the use?" Morson howled. "I'll soon be dead, anyway. Might as well die young and unspoiled." He untied his apron and hurled it across the room. "Now everything's going to be so —so *rotten*. We're going to have to ask them all sorts of nasty, personal questions, and probably they'll ask us nasty, personal questions. It's going to be dull and disgusting! And then they'll kill us, which will be even more disgusting . . . though less dull, I'll admit."

"All we have to ask them about are the prozius stones," Garnett told him. "That's all we're here for. I intend to do my duty, but I'm damned if I'll exceed it. And, if the natives pose any personal questions, I'll simply tell them they should have asked the previous expeditions, instead of killing them."

"You're so brave, Clyde," Morson said, drying his eyes on the dish towel. "I wish I were like you."

It's easy to be brave when there's no hope left, Garnett thought. But somehow he found himself actually feeling hopeful. "You don't need to go out with me, Jimmy, if you don't want to," he said.

Morson drew himself up until he almost looked really Navy. "You know I'm with you to the end, Clyde!"

That curious optimism flickered again in Garnett. "It might not be the end. In our family there's an old saying: 'Don't give up the ship!' Well—"

"Honestly, Clyde," Morson exploded, "sometimes you make me sick! If we must die, let's die without clichés." Then he buried his face in his hands. "I'm sorry, Clyde; you know I didn't really mean it."

Garnett patted his shoulder. He felt more like kicking him, but this was neither the time nor the place for a quarrel. "I know you didn't, Jimmy," he said heavily. "We've both been under a strain and let's be glad it's going to be resolved at last. Now, chin up; we want to make a good impression."

And, arm in arm, the two young men went out to meet their fate.

"I don't think it was in good taste to bring those coffins along," the doctor said to the captain, as they stepped into the flyer, the captain having decided he required company on this sad occasion.

"Oh, come on now, doc," the captain said cheerfully; "then we'd have had to waste time while the carpenter made a pair, and they'd never be as good as the ones we brought. All metal with plush linings. You can't beat Terra for high-class artifacts. I always say."

"You're a ghoul!"

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The captain was piqued. "Look, doc, there's no use kidding ourselves: the boys must be dead. We'll give them a bang-up funeral in space. The admiral and the senator said to spare no expense, and we won't. Took on an extra tank of whiskey when we shipped out. Why, the crew's been counting the light-years. . . ."

The doctor closed his eyes and moved his lips, which annoyed the captain, because he knew the doctor to be of an agnostic temperament.

Shortly after dawn, the flyer landed in the clearing and the two officers emerged. They looked wonderingly at the not-large but impressive structure that stood before them. "The natives never built anything of their own here before!" the captain said. "Seemed to regard the site as taboo—or something. And what happened to the prefab? They never touched any of the physical installations before!"

The doctor had been giving the edifice a closer look. "But this is the prefab!" he exclaimed. "Been drastically remodelled, but underneath it all it's just standard issue OP-62X5."

This puzzled the captain even more. "Why would the natives do a thing like that?"

"Natives be damned! Can't you recognize Woody Grove Modern when you see it? The boys did this themselves." He stepped back for a better view. "You certainly must agree; they do have a flair!"

The captain's eyes narrowed. "You mean they were using the time they should have spent collecting prozius stones in this—this *nonsense!* Just let me get my hands on them. . . !" His voice trailed off in futility.

"Yes, the poor lads are where your evil desires for revenge cannot harm them." And the doctor looked piously up at the Earthlike sky.

The captain moved toward the house. "Garden's in good shape," he noted, "so the natives must have taken over . . . afterward. They never did that before, either." He sighed. "Things have been happening here, doctor—strange things, no doubt—but I suppose we'll never know."

"Oh, I wouldn't count on that," the doctor said.

The captain threw a wistful look at the flyer, but he wasn't going to be the one to suggest retreat. If a mere medical man could face the unknown, so could he. "Well," he said, "I guess we might as well go inside and see how many stones the boys managed to collect before they—ah—passed on." He put his hand on the doorknob, and found himself curiously reluctant to turn it. He was afraid. For shame, he told himself, and you a Space Officer.

He opened the door and went inside, the doctor following. Both

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gasped. "Not quite my type of thing," the doctor said, looking around the spacious rococo drawing room, "but handsome, very handsome, indeed."

For a moment the captain spluttered inarticulately. Then he found his voice. "The Stores Officer'll be furious! If—if only those two miserable creatures were alive, so I could kill them with my bare hands!" He sighed. "But the age of miracles is over!"

There was a noise from the inner room. The captain jumped. "What's that?"

"Maybe we're about to witness a renaissance of miracles," the doctor said.

"Who's out there?" a sleepy voice demanded. And then there was an apparition: Lieutenant Garnett. It was easier to accept the fact that he was alive than that he had been enrolled in one of the heavenly bands, though his magnificent garment—a brocaded robe of unearthly manufacture—would not have been ill-suited to a seraph.

"Oh," he said, yawning. "I might have known it would be you. No Persiperian would dream of entering another's house without knocking."

"This house belongs to the Space Service, sir!" the captain thundered.

Morson, also lavishly robed, appeared behind Garnett, a smirk on his chubby-cheeked face. "According to Persiperian law," he said smugly, "it's our house, because a thing belongs to the ones who made it beautiful."

"Persiperian law does not apply to you, sir!" The captain was outraged, not only by this impudence, but by the knowledge that these two incompetents had apparently succeeded where hundreds of better men, women, and children had failed. "And I'll thank you to address your superior officer respectfully."

"I'm afraid you're laboring under several misapprehensions, *mon capitaine*," Garnett said with a faint, provoking smile. "Persiperian law does apply to us. You see, we've become naturalized citizens." Crossing the room, he lit an elaborate device which gave off gouts of thick, perfumed smoke.

"We've gone native, you see," Morson agreed, lighting another such gadget. He spoiled the effect, though, by choking.

"You—you *deserters!*" the captain raged. "I'll have you floated back in irons!"

Both young men smiled. "Oh, I hardly think so," Garnett said.

"I'll bet your 'fellow citizens' wouldn't dare stop us!"

"They wouldn't try. A man's private battle is his own private concern, so long as it is conducted with propriety." Garnett paused; then added softly, "But I think the Earth Government wouldn't like it if you did that. No, sir,

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they wouldn't be a bit pleased."

So this is what it feels like to be on the verge of apoplexy, the captain thought. "Our government displeased because I upheld Naval discipline!" he barked. "Don't think that, just because you're Admiral Garnett's nephew—"

"It has nothing at all to do with that," Garnett said impatiently. "In fact, the connection is one I deplore rather than vaunt."

"The Naval mind," Morson murmured, "always so *crass!*"

"And so is the reason why the government would be displeased if the captain did anything to—ah—terminate our careers. Look here, captain!" Garnett glided over to an intricate handmade chest and opened it. It was full of prozius stones. He unlocked a hand-carved cabinet. From every shelf, heaped-up jewels gleamed richly. He removed the needlepoint cover from a standard-issue footlocker. Gems twinkled inside. "All told we have over two hundred pounds of them," he explained, "more than all the other expeditions put together managed to amass."

The captain stared. "Now, sir," Garnett smiled, "which do you think the government is more interested in—discipline or prozius?"

The doctor—damn his eyes—chuckled. He'd never been really Navy, the captain thought, not really true-blue deep-down Navy.

"We'll consider this lot yours, because you subsidized the original undertaking," Garnett said in brisk, businesslike tones. "However, from now on, we expect to be paid for all stones we procure in the future. After all, they were paid to us."

"Paid to *you!*" the captain yelled. "For government-issue trade goods!"

Morson sniggered. "That trumpery stuff! Honestly, we were ashamed to show it to them!"

Garnett threw him a quelling glance; then turned back to the captain. "We haven't touched your trade goods; most of them are still in their original wrappings. The natives don't seem to fancy machine-made items."

Since a choking fit had rendered the captain temporarily incapable of speech, the doctor took over. "What did you give for the stones, then?"

"Our services," Garnett told him. "Interior decoration and house renovation. Handicraft lessons. And, of course, handmade objects of art. Our things are well thought of here. Different, without being *outré.*"

"Garnett," the captain said, "whatever other failings you possessed, you always had a strong sense of duty. What became of it?"

Garnett gave him a blinding smile. "Oh, I still have it, sir; it's merely that I've transferred my allegiance. My sense of duty is

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now channelled in the interests of Persiper, but, I assure you, it's as strong as ever."

"But—but how did you do it? When anthropologists, sociologists, even psychologists couldn't even seem to establish minimal rapport, how come you two little pipsqueaks —you two little squir—you two succeeded?"

The two young men grinned at each other.

"I suppose it's a trade secret," the doctor said.

"Oh, no," Garnett smiled, "we'll tell you, if you like. It won't do you any good." He threw himself into an easy chair covered in a luxurious velvetlike pile. "But I'm forgetting my manners; please do sit down, gentlemen!"

Somehow this made the captain even angrier. "Sit down!" he echoed. "How dare you ask me to to—"

"Oh, sit down and listen, captain," the doctor said. "Later you can resume your futile threats. I, personally, am dying of curiosity about how all this came to pass." He lowered himself into a chair and the captain could think of nothing else to do but follow suit.

Garnett crossed his legs elegantly. "You see, captain, anthropology, sociology, psychology—anything along those lines would be about as legal here as lynching is on Earth. On Persiper asking personal questions is a violation of privacy, and that's a capital crime. For instance, if you kill somebody, you're not executed for taking his life but for violating his privacy."

"But you're executed all the same," the doctor observed.

"Oh, yes, of course. There's a fully-developed system of justice here; it just happened to develop along different lines from our own. It's the same with the other moral codes—the family system, property rights, and so on. . . ."

The captain strove to make sense out of this. "But, if you couldn't ask personal questions, how did you manage to get through to the natives?"

Garnett smiled and exhaled a languid puff of smoke. "We didn't try. That's how we succeeded."

"We minded our own business," Morson put in. "Something you terrestrials might well learn how to do."

"We didn't ask them any questions at all," Garnett explained. "In fact we ignored them. We made contact by *not* attempting to establish rapport."

The captain felt even more baffled, but the doctor nodded as if he understood.

Gleefully Morson added, "And if you try to send another expedition here, the natives'll just go and kill everybody again. Because they'll never be able to keep from meddling; humans are such a *nosy* species. And so, if you want the

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prozius stones, you'll just have to leave matters in our hands."

"Or," the doctor said, before the captain could spit out an answer, "organize the next expedition more carefully. Perhaps it was unwise to send out the earlier ones on a . . . colonial basis. If, as you mentioned earlier, lieutenant, the mores here are so drastically different from ours, why, then our family life could have aspects that are offensive to them."

"I don't see how that could be possible!" the captain protested. "Good, clean, togetherness; that's universal!"

There was a brief silence; then the doctor went on, "I'm going to suggest to Naval Intelligence that any subsequent expeditions should be all-male, to avoid familial complications."

"You mean the natives were after our women all along!" the captain cried, much struck. "And the scientists all died defending their honor! Well, I'd never have thought it of them!"

The other three looked at each other. "All members of the expedition," the doctor continued, "should be screened for lack of sociological and biological interests, aptitude-tested for artistic inclinations."

This was something the captain could understand. "No ship in the Navy could be asked to ferry out a batch of hand-picked nuts like that. The crew would mutiny!"

"So much for your vaunted discipline, captain," Garnett said. He looked uneasy. "It might work, doctor; it just might work. But it would take a lot of time and planning. . . ."

"Naturally it would," the doctor replied cheerfully. It would be at least ten years before we could get things rolling. And, by that time, you'd probably be glad to see the expedition."

"Never!" Morson declared. "I'll never in all my life be glad to see those—those vile interlopers!"

There was a pause. "You might feel different after ten years, Jimmy," Garnett said finally.

"But—but what kind of a report am I going to make?" the captain sputtered. "How can I say that, instead of dying gloriously in their country's service, the admiral's nephew and the senator's son are *traitors!* And—and what about the crew? They've been looking forward to the funeral all the way out. I don't like to think of what they might do if they're thwarted!"

Garnett shook his head sadly.

"Calm yourself, captain," the doctor said. "The admiral and the senator will be told that the boys died heroes' deaths. We'll fill the coffins with something or other, so the crew can have their fun. Because the boys died in action on a hostile planet, it should mean fifteen rockets and at least eight choruses of the Spaceman's Re-

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treat." He smiled. "I daresay this will be the finest funeral ever held in space."

"Oh," Morson cried, "it sounds wonderful; how I wish I could be there!"

"So do I," the captain said between his teeth.

Through Time And Space With Ferdinand Feghoot: LIV

The beautiful but psychotic Cleopatra II ascended the restored throne of Egypt in 2054. She at once set about revising society according to the notions of her favorite novelist, Aldous Huxley. She had every Egyptian classified from Alpha to Epsilon, with set duties and drudgeries. She ordered all children into State nurseries to be properly conditioned. She decreed sexual promiscuity.

Chaos ensued, and her desperate Ministers finally called in Ferdinand Feghoot, who warned them that her case was so far advanced that even he could only guarantee to arrest it.

Disguised as one of her lovers, Feghoot embraced the Queen passionately, gave her a tranquilizer, put her under hypnosis, and in three weeks of expert psychotherapy effected what seemed a full cure. The Queen rescinded all her decrees and submitted to Constitutional government. She showered Feghoot with honors and jewels.

A month later, however, in the *Times,* he saw the brief headline *Repentant Queen Paints Dam Gray.* The story stated that Cleopatra II had caused the great Aswan Dam to be painted with 4000 tons of deep-penetrating gray cement stain. "It will stand as a perpetual reminder of my folly," she was quoted as saying.

"It is as I feared," sighed Ferdinand Feghoot. "The cure is not complete. Failing to create a brave new world, the Queen after mania somber dies Aswan."

—GRENDEL BRIARTON (with thanks to Cora Anne Cunningham)

See Feghoot advertisement in "Marketplace," page 129.

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This is a horrible story.

MYRRHA

by Gary Jennings

Excerpts from the report of the court-appointed psychiatrist, concurring in the commitment of Mrs. Shirley Makepeace Spencer to the Western State Hospital at Staunton, Virginia:

TO ALL STIMULI APPLIED, SUBject remains blind, deaf, mute and paralyzed . . .

Catatonic schizophrenia . . .

. . . complete withdrawal . . .

Briefly, subject's formerly uneventful domestic life was recently disrupted by two tragic circumstances. Two loved ones died violently; but by indisputable accident, as attested by attending physicians.

To judge from her diary, subject reacted rationally enough to the *fact* of these deaths. Traumatic withdrawal appears to have developed from her inability to accept them as accidental. Although an intelligent, educated woman, she mentions toward the end of her diary, "a blight, a curse." When Mrs. Spencer hints at suspecting her innocent house guest of complicity in the tragedies, the textbook syndrome is complete.

Events leading up to her psychogenic deterioration are set down in subject's daily journal. The appended extractions have been arranged in narrative form, edited only in the excision of extraneous matter and repeated datelines.

NOTE: The last, unfinished sentence, which subject wrote just before the onset of catatonia, is inexplicable. In the absence of any other indication that she was obsessed with classical mythology, the final entry can only be dismissed as hysteric incoherence.

Excerpts from the journal of Mrs. Shirley Spencer, dated at intervals, May 10, 1960 to final entry, sometime in July, 1961. Intervals of one day or more are indicated by asterisks:

I had forgotten how beautiful Myrrha Kyronos was. Is, I should say. When she arrived this morning, I just had to get out the old

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Southern Seminary annual and look up her picture. She hasn't changed an iota. She was a year ahead of me at school, probably a year older. That would make her 31 now, and she might just have doffed the cap and gown! And after that long ocean crossing, and the ride in the trucks and all, and having to mother a dozen horses and half a dozen helpers the whole way!

Tom's mouth fell open when he met her. Afterwards he said if he'd known what a "temptation" I was putting in his way he'd never have agreed to let Myrrha come for the summer. Pooh to the temptation; Myrrha's interested in nothing but her horses. And lovely creatures they are; she must have rounded them up on Mount Olympus. By comparison, our gentle old saddle jades here on the farm appear as torpid as tortoises.

Myrrha has certainly brought excitement. Right from the start, when her letter came. I don't believe Mr. Tatum bothered to stop at any mailbox between Warrenton and here, he was so anxious to deliver that letter from Greece. And I was just about as amazed as he was. Myrrha and I hadn't been "close" at school, and I'd had no reason to give her a thought since then.

And now here she is. And here I am, dabbling in international relations or whatever you'd call it. This is the first time Greece has ever competed in the National Horse Show. When I told Myrrha we were honored to play hosts to a representative of the Greek team, she laughed and said, "I *am* the Royal Hellenic Team."

* * * Of course the Show doesn't come off until November. Myrrha brought the horses here now to get them used to American weather and atmosphere and feed —apparently foreign horses are a sensitive lot.

In just 24 hours, Myrrha has become undisputed queen of the Spencer acres, at least as far as our Dorrie is concerned. Dorrie, who can hardly speak "Virginian" yet, is beginning to imitate Myrrha's exotic speech. A slight accent, disarming rather than distracting, that I don't remember her having, way-back-when.

* * * Even if we weren't just thrilled to have Myrrha herself here, we'd enjoy basking in her reflected glory. The horses are the showpiece and envy of the neighborhood, and she is the cynosure of all the local young men. Cars drive by hourly, full of sightseers either openly ogling or pretending a nonchalant interest.

For the first time today I tried to strike up a conversation with one of Myrrha's—whatever they are; she has a Greek word for them —herders, I suppose. And I can say truthfully it was all Greek to me. None of them speaks English.

All are dark, saturnine, hairy

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little men. They keep strictly to themselves—and the horses, of course. They seem to have made provision for their keep. Whatever it is they cook for themselves down there by the barn smells like singed hair and is eaten wrapped in a grape leaf. At night they amuse themselves with a sonorous and inharmonious tweedling; Pan-pipes, is my guess.

* * * Good old bumbling Tom got familiar enough to ask her why her husband hadn't come over. When she admitted there was none, he essayed gallantry and said he would expect her to be married to a prince. She told him quite seriously, "King Paul has only daughters."

It does appear that Myrrha hails from one of the wealthiest families in her country, which somehow I never realized in the old days at school. Her father owns all these horses she brought, and is underwriting the expenses of the whole venture, all for the greater glory of Greece.

* * * Myrrha told us, on arrival, that we must try to overlook any of her "so-strange" customs. I'd call them superstitions. Why, when we went walking in the woods, did she refuse to cross the branch? She said the still water would reflect her image; so what? And why, when I resurrected my old class ring, did she recoil and say she had a horror of wearing rings?

* * * Dorrie, who has always treated our own horses with a sort of lazy, familiarity-bred contempt, looks on Myrrha's as if they were Santa's reindeer. It gives me a turn, sometimes, to see her dodging in and out among their sharp hoofs, or brazenly braiding one's tail. But hair-triggered and wall-eyed as they are at any other intrusion, they suffer her as benignly as if she were their own frisky colt.

And Myrrha doesn't seem to mind, any more than she minds Tom's tomfoolery. Nowadays he pretends to be a horseflesh expert. He's forever down at the stable or the paddock, looking wise, or expounding on some trick-of-the-trade known only to him, and getting in the little Greek herders' way, and one of these times he's going to get kicked in the head.

* * * Was admiring Myrrha's steeds today, for the umptieth time, and she scolded me gently about my own Merry Widow. Said she could have made a show-horse, if I'd spent a little time and effort instead of letting her turn out to be just—"A drudge?" I laughed. "Like me?" and said that Merry and I suited each other.

Tom said maybe it wasn't too late; how about Myrrha letting one of her stallions service Merry Widow after the Show doings were over? I thought, and told him so, that that was an indelicate suggestion. He and Myrrha laughed.

* * * First friction tonight.

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My fault. We were re-hashing schooldays. Thinking it was the typical hair-letting-down hen session, I humorously confided to Myrrha that I and the other girls had considered her rather too "queenly" in her demeanor.

Myrrha was not amused; she practically demanded to know what were the necessary qualifications for queenliness. Somewhat flustered, I said, "Well, after all, the only other Greek any of us knew was the little man at the depot fruit-stand over in Lexington."

Black, an artist friend once told me, is considered a "cold" color. Myrrha's eyes are black, but they flared out like heat-lightning. I shouldn't have said what I did.

* * * I shouldn't have said what I did. Things have been very awkward and a little awful for the past two days. Myrrha is being queenly in earnest, now, and I guess I'm in the role of the Court Fool. Tom has chided me for my "inhospitality," and even Dorrie turns an occasional melancholy gaze on Mommy for tilting at her idol.

* * * Myrrha unbent a little tonight; at least far enough to contribute a decanter of wine for the dinner, and invite me, too, to partake. I could have done without it. I forget what it's called—some Greek name—but its proudest feature is that it's spiced with resin (and tastes to me like old socks). Tom liked it fine; he and Myrrha had quite a high time. Quite high.

Just one of their customs, she called it, but I've been gargling mouthwash all evening.

* * * I wondered a little, at the time, when I saw her take the stone away from Laddie. It was just a plain old pebble; the dog had been idly chewing on it. She wheedled it away from him, stuck it in her pocket and walked away. Laddie didn't seem to care, and I soon forgot the incident.

Then tonight she and Tom insisted I have some more of that wretched resin wine. Tom was quite set on my not being a "party-pooper"—I think he must have had a little something previously. So I choked down a sip, then nearly choked for real. In the bottom of the decanter was the pebble Laddie had been mouthing.

There must be some reason, but she didn't even pretend to vouchsafe one. Now I come to think, she didn't taste the wine tonight.

* * * Bad to worse. Perhaps I really shouldn't have made such a fuss about that pebble; all the conflict seems to date from that night. Or was it from the time I made that thoughtless remark about the fruit peddler? Anyway, Tom has taken Myrrha's side whenever there's been the slightest brush between us. There've been more than a few, and not all of them slight.

The worst was at Dorrie's bedtime, when she refused to kiss me goodnight, because I'd "been bad"

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to her adored Myrrha. Finally, by promising to mend my ways, I bought a reluctant kiss—and tasted that damnable resin wine on my child's lips!

* * * Don't know what to do. First that horrible scene, when I found what was left of Laddie, down by the herders' campfires. And then the horrible scene when I confronted Myrrha—and Tom leaped to her defense.

And now both of them gone. Gone all day, and here it is after midnight. Dorrie upstairs, still awake, crying for Myrrha to come and kiss her goodnight.

* * * Surely there can be no more horrible day in my life. Tom's confession was enough to chill my soul. And then Myrrha's denial of it—and his confusion. Is he losing his mind, or is she driving me out of mine?

He came to me, crying, pleading forgiveness "for what happened in the hayloft," pleading that *she* had been the seducer. Then she, so cool, so self-possessed, said. "Do you think I'd give myself to *that?*" and I smelled the reek of resin on his breath.

She called our own old faithful Wheeler to witness, and he nodded witlessly and stammered yes, that Miss Kyronos had spent all night doctoring a croupy mare at the stable.

Tom, Tom, you were so bewildered. Did you confess to a dream? A wish?

* * * Poor Myrrha. I've been so shaken by what has happened in these last couple days that I haven't thought what they might have meant to her. It was my mare, Merry Widow, she spent that night nursing. And here I was all ready and willing to believe—

Anyway, today we've been close, friendly and forgiving, and more or less re-cemented our friendship. Tom—chastened, remorseful and shamefaced—has spent all day down at the stable, taking over the care of Merry Widow. When he comes up, I'll tell him he's forgiven, too.

* * * Tomorrow is the funeral. How many days has it been since I last wrote here? Why am I writing now? I look back over the pages and marvel at having written "there can be no more horrible day in my life." I must force myself not to write that again here, in mortal fear that I may thereby call down another blow from fate.

If only I could have said goodbye, but he'll be buried in a sealed coffin. Dr. Carey says the stallions did it because, when Tom went among Myrrha's herd, he still had the smell of the sick mare on him.

* * * I don't know what I'd have done all this time without Myrrha here to help me. Bless her, she realized that I wanted only seclusion. She has even neglected her duties with the horses, to keep Dorrie occupied and out of the way, and leave me to meander

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alone through the empty house.

But I must come back to myself. Dorrie will need me. Sooner or later she will be asking why Daddy hasn't come back "from town."

* * * I think I have lost all capacity for grief, all vulnerability to horror. I know I have lost all sense of time. All I have left is a mild wonder that there really can be such a thing as a blight, a curse—and wonder, why me? why us?

I can't think when it was—it wasn't recently, because I am sure she's been gone for quite a long time. Whenever it was, she came running up the hill from the wooded place down near the branch. She was chewing happily, eating from the little paper bag she carried, and calling, "Marshmallows, Mommy!"

Whenever that was, she died that night in convulsions. The doctor—not Dr. Carey; we couldn't get him; and it was an emergency—whoever the doctor was, he said she had eaten Amanita-something. Not a marshmallow, a mushroom that they call the Death Angel.

* * * Haven't written. Things so seldom, so far between I don't remember at the time, and when I think to write, by then they've lost all meaning. But write that farm now is empty as an echo. Whatever it is about this place that made Myrrha and the herders take their horses and leave, whatever it is seems to keep everybody else away as well.

* * * Everything suffers. My bay mare Merry Widow foaled this morning after whole night of painful labor, screamed like a woman. I not much help and no one here with me but simple old Wheeler, not much help either.

* * * Merry Widow unmotherly, refused to lick foal clean at birth. Today ignores, even shuns the poor trembly thing. Wheeler won't touch it either, says it can't live long. I don't care, going to keep it anyway. Somebody, it reminds me so of somebody, somebody I loved.

* * * Its dear little hands are

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SCIENCE

The trouble with the Asimov-Aristotle Three Theorems for proving the Earth is round is that they are all based on optical illusions. The Earth is flat, *and we have felt it our duty to point this out to Dr. A. His only reply was, "I will kill and eat you if you cut out my final pun." As we do not wish to add anthropophagy to the Sage's already dreadfully long list of crimes, we have reluctantly stayed our sword. No fair peeking, though—read the whole thing.*

THE SHAPE OF THINGS

by Isaac Asimov

EVERY CHILD COMES STAGGERING OUT OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL WITH A load of misstatements of fact firmly planted in his head. He may forget, for instance, as the years drift by, that the Battle of Waterloo was fought in 1815 or that seven times six is forty-two; but he will never, never forget, while he draws breath, that Columbus proved the world was round. And, of course, Columbus proved no such thing. What Columbus did prove was that it doesn't matter how wrong you are, as long as you're lucky.

The fact that the Earth is spherical in shape was first suggested in the 6th Century B.C. by various Greek philosophers. Some believed it out of sheer mysticism; the reasoning being that the sphere was the perfect solid and that therefore the Earth was a sphere. To us, the premise is dubious and the conclusion a *non sequitur,* but to the Greeks it carried weight.

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However, not all Greek philosophers were mystics and there were rational reasons for believing the Earth to be spherical. These were capably summarized by Aristotle in the 4th Century, B.C. and turned out to be three in number:

1) If the Earth were flat then all the stars visible from one point on the Earth's surface would be visible from all other points (barring minor distortions due to perspective and, of course, the obscuring of parts of the horizon by mountains). However, as travelers went southward, some stars disappeared beyond the northern horizon, while new stars appeared above the southern horizon. This proved the earth was not flat but had some sort of curved shape. Once that was allowed one could reason further that all things fell toward Earth's center and got as close to it as they could. That solid shape in which the total distance of all parts from the center is a minimum is the sphere, Q.E.D.

2) Ships on leaving harbor and sailing off into the open sea, seemed to sink lower and lower in the water, until at the horizon only the tops were visible. The most reasonable conclusion was that the water surface, though it seemed flat, was a gently curving hill behind which the ships disappeared. Furthermore, since this effect was equally intense whatever the direction in which the ship sailed, the gently curving hill of the ocean seemed to curve equally in all directions. The only solid shape that curves equally in all directions is a sphere, Q.E.D.

3) It was accepted by the Greek philosophers that the Moon is eclipsed when it entered the Earth's shadow. As darkness crossed over the face of the Moon, the encroaching shadow marked off a projection of the shape of the Earth, and that shadow was always the segment of a circle. It didn't matter whether the Moon were high in the sky or at either horizon. The shadow was always circular. The only solid for which all projections are circular is a sphere, Q.E.D.

Now Aristotle's reasoning carried conviction. All learned men throughout history, who had access to Aristotle's book, accepted the sphericity of the Earth. Even in the 8th Century, A.D., in the very depth of the Dark Ages, Saint Bede (usually called "the Venerable Bede") collecting what scraps of physical science were still remembered from Greek days, plainly stated the Earth was a sphere. In the 14th Century, Dante's "Divine Comedy" which presented a detailed view of the orthodox astronomy of the day, presented the Earth as spherical.

Consequently, there is no doubt that Columbus knew the Earth was a sphere. But so did all other educated men in Europe.

In that case, what was Columbus's difficulty? He wanted to sail west from Europe and cross the Atlantic to Asia. If the Earth were

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spherical this was theoretically possible, and if educated men all agreed with the premise and, therefore, with the conclusion, why the resistance to Columbus's scheme?

Well, to say the Earth is a sphere is not enough. The question is—how large a sphere?

The first person to measure the circumference of the Earth was a Greek astonomer, named Eratosthenes of Cyrene, and he did it without ever leaving home.

If the Earth were a sphere, as Eratosthenes was certain it was, then the Sun's rays should, at any one instant of time, strike different parts of the Earth's surface at different angles. For instance, on June 21, the Sun was just overhead at noon in the city of Syene, Egypt. In Alexandria, Egypt (where Eratosthenes lived) the Sun was not quite overhead at that moment but made a small angle with the zenith.

Eratosthenes knew the distance between Alexandria and Syene, and it was simple geometry to calculate the curvature of the Earth's surface that would account for the displacement of the Sun. From that one could further calculate the radius and the circumference of the Earth.

Eratosthenes worked out this circumference to be 25,000 miles in our modern units of length (or perhaps a little higher—the exact length in miles of the unit he used is uncertain) and this is just about right!

About 100 B.C., however, a Greek geographer named Posidonius of Apamea checked Eratosthenes' work and came out with a lower figure —a circumference of 18,000 miles.

This smaller figure may have seemed more comfortable to some Greeks for it reduced the area of the unknown. If the larger figure were accepted than the known world made up only about one-sixth of the Earth's surface area. If the smaller figure were accepted, the Earth's surface area was reduced by half and the known world made up a third of the Earth's surface area.

Now the Greek thinkers were much concerned with the unknown portions of the Earth (which seemed as unattainable and mysterious to them as, until recently, the other side of the Moon seemed to us) and they filled it with imaginary continents. To have less of it to worry about must have seemed a relief and the Greek astonomer, Claudius Ptolemy, who lived about 150 A.D., was one of those who accepted Posidonius's figure.

It so happened that in the latter centuries of the Middle Ages, Ptolemy's books were as influential as Aristotle's and if the 15th Cen-

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tury geographers accepted Aristotle's reasoning as to the sphericity of the Earth, many of them also accepted Ptolemy's figure of its circumference.

An Italian geographer, named Paolo Toscanelli, was one of them. Since the extreme distance across Europe and Asia is some 13,000 miles (a piece of knowledge geographers had become acquainted with thanks to Marco Polo's voyages in the 13th Century) and the total circumference was 18,000 miles or less, then one would have to travel westward from Spain no more than 5,000 miles to reach "the Indies." In fact, since there were islands off the eastern coast of Asia, such as the Zipangu (Japan) spoken of by Marco Polo, the distance might be only 4,000 miles or even less. Toscanelli drew a map in the 1470's, showing this, picturing the Atlantic Ocean with Europe and Africa on one side and Asia, with its offshore islands, on the other.

Columbus obtained a copy of the map and some personal encouragement from Toscanelli and was an enthusiastic convert to the notion of reaching Asia by the westward route. All he needed now was government financing.

The most logical place to go for such financing was Portugal. In the 15th Century, many of Europe's luxuries (including spices, sugar and silk) were available only by overland routes from the Far East, and the Turks who straddled the route charged all the traffic could bear in the way of middle-man fees. Some alternate route was most desirable and the Portuguese, who were at the extreme southeastern edge of Europe, conceived the notion of sailing around Africa and reaching the Far East by sea, outflanking the Turks altogether. Throughout the 14th Century, then, the Portuguese had been sending out expedition after expedition, further and further down the African coast. (The Portuguese "African effort" was as difficult for those days, as our "space effort" is for ours.)

In 1484, when Columbus appealed to John II of Portugal for financing, Portuguese expeditions had all but reached the southern tip of Africa (and in 1487, they were to do so).

The Portuguese, at the time, were the most experienced navigators in Europe, and King John's geographers viewed with distrust the low figure for the circumference of the Earth. If it turned out that the high figure, 25,000 miles, were correct, and if the total east-west stretch of Europe and Asia were 13,000 miles,—then it followed, as the night the day, that a ship would have to sail 12,000 miles west from Portugal to reach Asia. No ship of that day could possibly make such an uninterrupted ocean voyage.

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The Portuguese decision, therefore, was that the westward voyage was theoretically possible but, given the technology of the day, completely impractical. The geographers advised King John to continue work on Project Africa and to turn down the Italian dreamer. This was done.

Now, mind you, the Portuguese geographers were perfectly right. It *is* 12,000 miles from Portugal west to Asia, and no ship of the day could possibly have made such a voyage. The fact is that Columbus never did reach Asia by the western route, whereas the Portuguese voyagers succeeded, within 13 years, in reaching Asia by the African route. As a result, tiny Portugal built a rich and far-flung Empire, becoming the first of the great European colonialists. Enough of that Empire has survived into 1962 to permit them to be the last as well.

And what is the reward of the Portuguese geographers for proving to be right in every last particular? Why, school children are taught to sneer at them.

Columbus obtained the necessary financing from Spain in 1492. Spain had just taken the last Moslem strongholds on the Iberian peninsula and, in the flush of victory, reached for some daring feat of navigation that would match the deeds of the Portuguese. (In the language of today, they needed an "ocean spectacular" to improve their "world image"). So they gave Columbus three foundering hulks and let him have his pick of the prison population for crewmen and sent him off.

It would have meant absolutely certain death for Columbus and his men, thanks to his wrongness, were it not for his incredible luck. The Greek dreamers had been right. The unoccupied wastes of the Earth did indeed possess other continents and Columbus ran aground on them after only 3,000 miles. (As it was, he barely made it; another thousand miles and he would have been gone.)

The Portuguese geographers had not counted on what are now known as the American continents (they would have been fools to do so) but neither had Columbus. In fact, Columbus never admitted he had reached anything but Asia. He died in 1506 still convinced the earth was 18,000 miles in circumference;—stubbornly wrong to the end.

So Columbus had not proved the earth was round; that was already known. In fact, since he had expected to reach Asia and had failed, his voyage was an argument *against* the sphericity of the Earth.

In 1519, however, five ships set sail from Spain under Ferdinand Magellan (a Portuguese navigator in the pay of Spain) with the intention of completing Columbus's job and reaching Asia, and then con-

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tinuing on back to Spain. Such an expedition was as difficult for its day as orbiting a man is for ours. The expedition took three years and made it by an inch. An uninterrupted 10,000 mile trip across the Pacific all but finished them (and they were far better prepared than Columbus had been). Magellan himself died *en route.* However, the one ship that returned brought back a large enough cargo of spices to pay for the entire expedition with plenty left over.

This first circumnavigation of the Earth was experimental confirmation, in a way, of the sphericity of the planet, but that was scarcely needed. More important, it proved two other things. It proved the ocean was continuous; that there was one great sea in which the continents were set as large islands. This meant that any sea-coast could be reached from any other sea-coast, which was vital knowledge (and good news) for merchantmen. Secondly, it proved once and for all, that Eratosthenes was right and that the circumference of the Earth was 25,000 miles.

And yet, after all, though the Earth is round, it turned out, despite all Aristotle's arguments, that it wasn't a sphere after all.

Again we go back to the Greeks. The stars wheel about the Earth in a stately and smooth 24-hour cycle. The Greek philosophers realized that this could be explained in either of two ways. It was possible that the Earth stood still and the heaven rotated about it in a 24-hour period. Or the heavens might stand still while the Earth rotated about itself in 24 hours.

A few Greeks (notably Aristarchus of Samos) maintained, in the 3rd Century, B.C., that it was the Earth that rotated. The majority, however, held for a stationary Earth, and it was the latter who won out. After all, the Earth is large and massive, while the heavens are light and airy; surely it is more logical to suppose the latter turned.

The notion of the stationary Earth was accepted by Ptolemy and therefore by the Medieval scholars and by the Church. It was not until 1543 that a major onslaught was made against the view.

In that year, Nicholas Copernicus, a Polish astronomer, published his views of the Universe and died at once, ducking all controversy. According to his views (which were like those of Aristarchus) the Sun was the center of the Universe, and the Earth revolved about it as one planet among many. If the Earth were only a minor body circling the Sun, it seemed completely illogical to suppose that the stars revolved about our planet. Copernicus therefore maintained that the Earth rotated on its axis.

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The Copernican view was not, of course, accepted at once and the world of scholarship argued the matter for a century. As late as 1633, Galileo was forced by the Inquisition to abjure his belief that the Earth moved and to affirm that it was motionless. However, that was the dying gasp of the motionless-Earth view, and there has been no scientific opposition to Earth's rotation since. (Nevertheless, it was not until 1851, that the Earth's rotation was actually confirmed by experiment, but that is another story.)

Now if the Earth rotated, the theory that it was spherical in shape suddenly became untenable. The man who first pointed this out was Isaac Newton, in the 1680's.

If the Earth were stationary, gravitational forces would force it into spherical shape (minimum total distance from the center) even if it were not spherical to begin with. If the Earth rotated, however, a second force would be applied to every particle on the planet. This is centrifugal force, which would counter gravity and would tend to move particles *away* from the center of the Earth.

But the surface of a rotating sphere moves at varying velocities depending upon its distance from the axis of rotation. At the point where the axis of rotation intersects the surface (as at the North and South Poles) the surface is motionless. As distance from the Poles increases, the surface velocity increases and is at its maximum at the Equator, which is equidistant from the Poles.

Whereas the gravitational force is constant (just about) at all points on Earth's surface, the centrifugal force increases rapidly with surface velocity. As a result the surface of the Earth lifts up slightly away from the center and the lifting is at its maximum at the Equator where the surface velocity is highest. In other words, said Newton, the Earth should have an equatorial bulge. (Or, to put it another way, it should be flattened at the Poles.)

This means that if an east-west cross-section of the Earth were taken at the Equator, that cross-section would have a circular boundary. If however, a cross-section were taken north-south through the Poles, that cross-section would have an elliptical boundary and the shortest diameter of the ellipse would run from Pole to Pole. Such a solid body is not a sphere but an "oblate spheroid."

To be sure, the ellipticity of the north-south cross-section is so small that it is invisible to the naked eye and, viewed from space, the Earth would seem a sphere. Nevertheless, the deviation from perfect sphericity is important, as I shall explain shortly.

Newton was arguing entirely from theory, of course, but it seemed

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to him he had experimental evidence as well. In 1673, a French scientific expedition in French Guiana found that the pendulum of their clock, which beat out perfect seconds in Paris, was moving slightly slower in their tropical headquarters—as compared with the steady motion of the stars. This could only mean that the force of gravity (which was what powered the swinging pendulum) was slightly weaker in French Guiana than in Paris.

This would be understandable if the scientific expedition were on a high mountain where the distance from the center of the Earth were greater than at sea-level and the gravitational force consequently weakened—but the expedition *was* at sea-level. Newton, however, maintained that, in a manner of speaking, the expedition was not truly at sea-level, but was high up on the Equatorial bulge and that that accounted for the slowing of the pendulum.

In this, Newton found himself in conflict with an Italian-born, French astronomer named Jean Dominique Cassini. The latter tackled the problem from another direction. If the Earth were not a true sphere, then the curvature of its surface ought to vary from point to point. (A sphere is the only solid that has equal curvature everywhere on its surface.) By triangulation methods, measuring the lengths of the sides and the size of the angles of triangles drawn over large areas of Earth's surface, one could determine the gentle curvature of that surface. If the Earth were truly an oblate spheroid, then this curvature ought to decrease as one approached either Pole.

Cassini had conducted triangulation measurements in the north and south of France and decided that the surface curvature was less, not in the north, but in the south. Therefore, he maintained, the Earth bulged at the Poles and was flattened at the Equator. If one took a cross-section of the Earth through the Poles, it would have an elliptical boundary indeed, but the longest (and not the shortest) diameter would be through the Poles. Such a solid is a "prolate spheroid."

For a generation, the argument raged. It was not just a matter of pure science either. I said the deviation of the Earth's shape from the spherical was important, despite the smallness of the deviation, and that was because ocean voyages had become commonplace in the 18th Century. European nations were squabbling over vast chunks of overseas real estate, and victory could go to the nation whose ships got less badly lost *en route*. To avoid getting lost one had to have accurate charts and such charts could not be drawn up unless the exact deviation of the Earth's shape from the spherical were known.

It was decided that the difference in curvature between northern and

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southern France was too small to decide the matter safely either way. Something more extreme was needed. In 1735, therefore, two French expeditions set out. One went to Peru, near the Equator. The other went to Lapland, near the North Pole. Both expeditions took years to make their measurements (and out of their difficulties arose a strong demand for a reform in standards of measurement that led, eventually, to the establishment of the metric system a half-century later). When the expeditions returned, the matter was settled. Cassini was wrong, and Newton was right. The equatorial bulge is 13 miles high which means that a point at sea-level on the Equator is 13 miles further from the center of the Earth than is sea-level at either Pole.

The existence of this equatorial bulge neatly explained one particular astronomic mystery. The heavens seems to rotate about an axis of which one end (the "North Celestial Pole") is near the North Star. An ancient Greek astronomer, Hipparchus of Nicaea, was able to show about 150 B.C., that this celestial axis is not fixed. It marks out a circle in the heavens and takes some 25,800 years to complete one turn of the circle. This is called "the precession of the equinoxes."

To Hipparchus, it seemed that the heavenly sphere simply rotated slowly in that fashion. He didn't know why. When Copernicus advanced his theory, he had to say that the Earth's axis wobbled in that fashion. He didn't know why, either.

Newton, however, pointed out that the Moon travelled in an orbit that was not in the plane of the Earth's Equator. During half of its revolution about the Earth, it was well to the north of the Equator and during the other half it was well to the south. If the Earth were perfectly spherical, the Moon would attract it in an all-one-piece fashion from any point. As it was, the Moon gave a special unsymmetrical yank at the Equatorial bulge. Newton showed that this pull at the bulge produced the precession of the equinoxes. This could be shown experimentally by hanging a weight on the rim of a spinning gyroscope. The axis of the gyroscope then precesses.

And thus the Moon itself came to the aid of scientists interested in the shape of things.

An artificial moon was to do the same, two and a half centuries after Newton's time.

The hero of the latest chapter in the drama of Earth's shape is Vanguard I, which was launched by the United States on March 17, 1958. It was the fourth satellite placed in orbit and is currently the oldest satellite still orbiting and emitting signals. Its path carried it so high

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above Earth's surface that in the absence of atmospheric interference it will stay in orbit for a couple of centuries. Furthermore, it has a solar battery which will keep it delivering signals for years.

The orbit of Vanguard I, like that of the Moon itself, is not in the plane of the Earth's equator, so Vanguard I pulls on the equatorial bulge and is pulled by it, just as the Moon does. Vanguard I isn't large enough to affect the Earth's motion, of course, but it is itself affected by the pull of the bulge, much more than the Moon is.

For one thing, Vanguard I is nearer to the bulge and is therefore affected more strongly. For another, what counts in some ways is the total number of revolutions made by a satellite. Vanguard I revolves about the Earth in 2¼ hours, which means that in a period of 14 months, it had completed about 4500 revolutions. This is equal to the total number of revolutions that the Moon has completed since the invention of the telescope. It follows that the motions of Vanguard I better reveal the fine structure of the bulge than the motions of the Moon do.

Sure enough, John A. O'Keefe, by studying the orbital irregularities of Vanguard I, was able to show that the Earth's equatorial bulge is not symmetrical. The satellite is yanked just a little harder when it is south of the Equator so that the bulge must be a little bulgier there. It has been calculated that the southern half of the equatorial bulge is up to 50 feet (not miles but *feet!*) further from the Earth's center than the northern half is. To balance this, the South Pole (calculating from sea-level) is one hundred feet closer to the center of the Earth than the North Pole is.

So the Earth is not an exact oblate spheroid, either. It is very, very, very slightly egg-shaped, with a bulging southern half and a narrow northern half; with a flattened southern tip and a pointy northern tip.

Nevertheless, to the naked eye, the Earth is still a sphere, and don't you forget it.

This final tiny correction is important in a grisly way. Nowadays, the national insanity of war requires that missiles not get lost *en route,* and missiles must be aimed far more accurately than ever a sailing vessel had to be. The exact shape of the Earth is more than ever important.

Moreover, this final correction even has theoretical implications. To allow such an asymmetry in the bulge against the symmetrical pull of gravity and push of centrifugal force, O'Keefe maintains, the interior of the Earth must be considerably more rigid than geophysicists had thought.

One final word—O'Keefe's descriptive adjective for the shape of the

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Earth, as revealed by Vanguard I, is "pear-shaped," and the newspapers took that up at once. The result is that readers of headlines must have the notion that the Earth is shaped like a Bartlett pear, or a Bosc pear, which is ridiculous. There are some varieties of pears that are closer to the egg-shaped, but the best-known varieties are far-off. However "pear-shaped" will last, I am sure, and will do untold damage to the popular conception of the shape of the Earth. Undoubtedly the next generation of kids will gain the firm conviction that Columbus proved the Earth is shaped like a Bartlett pear.

But it is an ill wind that blows no good, and I am breathlessly awaiting a certain opportunity. You see, in 1960, a book of mine, entitled THE DOUBLE PLANET, was published. It is about the Earth and Moon, which are more nearly alike in size than any other planet-satellite combination in the Solar system, so that the two may rightly be referred to as a "double planet."

Now someday, someone is going to pick up a copy of the book in my presence (I have my books strategically scattered about my house), and will leaf through it and say, "Is this about the Earth?"

With frantically beating heart, I will say, "Yes."

And he will say (I hope, I hope), "Why do you call the Earth a double planet?"

And then I will say (get this now), *"Because it is pair-shaped!!!"*

—Why am I the only one laughing?

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With the appearance of THE WAIT (F&SF, April, 1958), Kit Reed surprised and delighted our many myriads of readers with her description of a good young girl and her hypochondriac mother caught up in the curious ways and sexual mores of a small town which was definitely not *the Connecticut town where Mrs. Reed makes her home. The quality of her first story was sustained in her subsequent ones PIGGY (F&SF, August, 1961) and TO LIFT A SHIP (F&SF, April, 1962) as it is in this most recent one. How many a woman leading one of those lives of quiet desperation which another, earlier, New Englander spoke of, have wished that she—like Martha Merriam—could "new her youth like an eagle"—and how many a man! Reader, if you, too, long for a new you, pause: consider the case of Martha and Howard Merriam. Reflect. Ponder. Think twice. And always, but always, read the directions which come with the package.*

THE NEW YOU

by Kit Reed

"NOW—THE NEW YOU," THE ad said. It was a two-page spread in one of the glossier fashion magazines, and it was accompanied by a shadowed, grainy art photograph that hinted at the possibility of a miraculous transformation which hovered—so the ad said—at every woman's fingertips.

Raptly, Martha Merriam hunched forward, pulling at her violet-sprigged housedress so that it almost covered plump knees, and bent once more over the magazine. Raptly she contemplated the photograph, the list of promises framed in elegant italics, absently chewing a string of wiry, dun-colored hair.

In her more wistful, rebellious moments, Martha Merriam forgot her dumpy body and imagined herself the svelte, impeccable Marnie, taller by six inches and lighter

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by forty pounds. When a suaver, better-dressed woman cut her at a luncheon or her husband left her alone at parties she would retreat into dialogues with Marnie. Marnie knew just the right, devastating thing to say to chic, overconfident women, and Marnie was expert in all the wiles that keep a man at home. In the person of Marnie, Martha could pretend.

"Watch the Old You Melt Away," Martha read aloud, and as she mouthed the words for the second time Marnie strained inside her, waiting for release. Martha straightened imperceptibly, patting her doughy throat with a stubby hand, and as her eyes found the hooker—the price tag for the New You in small print in the lower right hand corner, longing consumed her, and Marnie took cover.

"We could use a New You," Marnie said.

"But three thousand dollars." Martha nibbled at the strand of hair.

"You have those stocks," Marnie prompted.

"But those were Howard's wedding present to me—part of his *business.*"

"He won't mind . . ." Marnie twisted and became one with the photograph.

"But a hundred shares . . ." The hank of hair was sodden now, and Martha was chewing faster.

"He won't mind when he sees us," Marnie said.

And Martha, eyes aglow, got up and went to the telephone almost without realizing what she was doing, and got her broker on the line.

The New You arrived as advertised two weeks later, and when it came, Martha was too excited to touch it, alone in the house as she was, with this impossibly beautiful future.

In mid-afternoon, when she had looked at the coffin-shaped crate from every possible angle and smoothed the ruffled, splintered edges of wood, she nerved herself to pull the ripcord the company had provided—and let her future begin. She jumped back with a little squeak as the hard crate sides fell away to reveal a black and richly molded box. Trembling, she twiddled the gold-plated clasp with the rosebud emblem and opened the lid.

For a moment, all she saw was an instruction booklet, centered on top of fold upon fold of purple tissue paper, but as she looked closer, she saw that the paper was massed to protect a mysterious, promising form which lay beneath. IMPORTANT: READ THIS BEFORE PROCEEDING, the booklet warned. Distracted, she threw it aside, reflecting as she did so that the last time she had seen paper folded in this way was around long-stemmed American Beauties —a dozen of them, which Howard had sent her a dozen years before.

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The last piece of paper came away in her fingers, revealing the figure beneath, and Martha gasped. It was a long-stemmed American Beauty—everything she had hoped for. She recognized her own expression in its face, but it was a superb, glamorous version of her face, and at the same time it was Marnie, Helen, Cleopatra—more than she had dared anticipate. It was the new her. Quivering with impatience to get into it, she bent over it without another thought for the instruction book, and plunged her arms to the elbows in the rustling, rising swirl of purple tissue paper. The sudden aura of perfume, the movement of the paper, a sense of mounting excitement overcame her, and the last thing she remembered was clasping the figure's silken hands in her own stubby fingers and holding them to her bosom as the two figures, new and old, tossed on a rushing purple sea. Then the moiling sheets of purple kaleidoscoped and engulfed her and she lost consciousness.

She was awakened by a squashy thud. She lay in the midst of the purple tissue, stretching luxuriously, thinking that she ought to get up to see what the thud had been. She raised one knee, in the beginning of a movement to get to her feet, and then stopped, delighted by its golden sleekness. She stretched the leg she knew must be just beyond that perfect knee, and then hugged shoulders lithe and smooth as a jungle cat's in a gradual awareness of what had happened. Then, remembering that the new her was quite naked and that Howard would be home any minute, she pulled herself together in one fluid glide of muscles and got to her feet. With the air of a queen, she lifted one foot delicately and stepped out of the box.

She remembered the line from the advertisement "Watch the Old You Melt Away," and she smiled languidly as she flowed away from the box. Yawning, she reached in the closet, picked up her old quilted wrapper and discarded it for the silk kimono Howard had brought her from Japan. It had fitted her ten years before, and then it had gotten too small. She looped the sash twice about her middle and then—still not too good to be an orderly housewife—she began folding the tissue paper that seemed to have exploded all over the room, and putting it in the box. As she came to the side where the old her had first touched the gold-plated rosebud, she swooped up a whole armful of tissue in a gesture of exuberance—and dropped it with a little scream. Her toe had hit something. Not wanting to look, she poked at the remaining pieces of paper with a gilded toenail. Her foot connected with something soft. She made herself look down, and stifled a moan.

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The old her had not melted away. It was still there, dowdy as ever in its violet-sprigged housedress. Its drab hair trailed like seaweed, and its hips seemed to spread where it lay, settling on the rug.

"But you promised!" the new, sleek Martha yelped. With a sudden sinking feeling, she rooted around in the rest of the purple tissue until she found the cast-off instruction book.

"Care must be exercised in effecting the transfer," the book warned in urgent italics. Then it went on with a number of complicated, technical directions about transfer and grounding, which Martha didn't understand. When she had grasped the new her's hands she had plunged right into the transfer, without a thought for the body she was leaving behind. And it had to be dematerialized at the time of transfer, no later. It was pointless to send botched jobs back to the company, the booklet warned. The company would send them back. Apparently, the new Martha was stuck with the old her.

"Ohh . . ." There was a little moan from the figure on the floor. And the old Martha sat up and looked dully around the room.

"You—" the new Martha looked at it with growing hatred. "You leave me alone," she said. She was about to lunge at it in a fit of irritation when there was a sound in the driveway. "Oh-oh. Howard." Without another thought, she pushed the lumpy, unresisting old her into the hall closet, locked it and pocketed the key.

Then, pulling the robe around her, she went to the door. "Howard, darling," she began.

He recognized her and he didn't recognize her. He stood just inside the doorway with the look of a child who has just been given a soda fountain, listening as she explained (leaving out certain details—the sale of his stock, the matter of the old her) in vibrant, intimate tones.

"Martha, darling," he said at last, pulling her toward him.

"Call me Marnie, dear. Hm?" she purred, and nestled against his chest.

Of course the change involved a new wardrobe, and new things for Howard too, as Marnie had read in a dozen glamour magazines how important an accessory a well-dressed man could be. The Merriams were swept up in a round of parties and were admitted, for the first time, to the city's most glittering homes. Howard's business flourished and Marnie, surrounded by admirers, far more attractive than the most fashionable of her rivals, thrived. There were parties, meetings, theatre dates, luncheon engagements with a number of attractive men. And what with one thing and another, Marnie didn't have much time for piddling

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around the house. The black box from the New You Company lay where she had left it, and the old her was still stacked—like an old vacuum cleaner, so far as she was concerned—unused, in the closet in the hall.

In the second week of her new life, Marnie began to notice things. The tissue paper around the New You box was disarrayed, and the instruction book was gone. Once, when she had stepped out of the bedroom for a moment, she thought she saw a shadow moving in the hall. "Oh, it's you," Howard said with an ambiguous look, when she returned to their room. "For a minute I thought . . ." He sounded almost wistful.

And there were crumbs—little trails of them—and empty food containers left in odd corners of the house.

Disturbed by the dirt which had begun to collect, Marnie refused two luncheon dates and a cocktail invitation and spent one of her rare afternoons at home. In slippers and the quilted house coat she had discarded the first day of her transformation, she began to clean the house. She was outraged to find a damp trail leading from the kitchen to the hall closet. With a rug-cleaning preparation she began scrubbing at the hall carpet, and she straightened her back, indignant, when she reached a particularly sordid little mixture of liquid and crumbs, right at the closet door. Fumbling in her pocket, she brought out the key and applied herself to the lock.

"You," she said disgustedly. She had almost forgotten.

"Yes—yes ma'am," the old her said humbly, almost completely cowed. The dumpy, violet-sprigged Martha was sitting in one corner of the closet, a milk carton in one hand and a box of marshmallow cookies open in her lap.

"Why can't you just . . . Why can't you . . ." Marnie snorted in disgust. There was chocolate at the corners of the creature's mouth, and it had gained another five pounds.

"A body has to live," the old her said humbly, trying to wipe away the chocolate. "You forgot—I had a key to the closet too."

"If you're going to be wandering around," Marnie said, tapping one vermilion fingernail on a flawless tooth, "you might as well be of some use. Come on," she said, pulling at the old her. "We're going to clear out the old maid's room. Move!"

The old Martha came to its feet and shambled behind Marnie, making little sounds of obedience.

The experiment was a flop. The creature ate constantly and had a number of (to Marnie) disgusting habits, and when Marnie invited some of Howard's more attractive business contacts in for dinner, it refused to wear a maid's cap and apron, and made a terrible mess of

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serving the soup. When she called it down at table, Howard protested mildly but Marnie was too engrossed in conversation with a Latin type who dealt in platinum to notice. Nor did she notice, in the days that followed, that Howard was putting on weight. She was slimmer even than she had been the first day of her new life, and she stalked the house impatiently, nervous and well-groomed as a high-bred horse. Howard seemed unusually quiet and withdrawn, and Marnie laid it to the effect of having the Old Her around, flat-footed and quiet in its violet-sprigged dress. When she caught it feeding Howard fudge cake at the kitchen table the very day she found he could no longer button his tuxedo, she knew the Old Her had to go.

She had a Dispose-All installed in her kitchen sink and began a quiet investigation into the properties of various poisons, in hopes of finding a permanent way of getting rid of it. But when she brought a supply of sharp-edged equipment into the house the violet-sprigged Martha seemed to sense what she was planning. It stood in front of her, wringing its hands humbly, until she noticed it.

"Well?" Marnie said, perhaps more sharply than she had intended.

"I—just wanted to say you can't get rid of me that way," it offered, almost apologetically.

"What way?" Marnie asked, trying to cover, and then, with a little gesture of indifference, she raised one eyebrow. "Okay, smarty, why not?"

"Killing's against the law," the creature said patiently.

"This would hardly be killing," Marnie said in her most biting tones. "It's like giving your old clothes to the rag man or the Good Will, or burning them. Getting rid of old clothes has never been murder."

"Not murder," the old her said, and it produced the instruction book. Patiently, it guided Marnie's eyes over the well-thumbed pages to a paragraph marked in chocolate. "Suicide."

Desperate, she gave it a thousand dollars and a ticket to California.

And for a few days, the gay life went on as it had before. The Merriams were entertained or entertaining day and night now, and Howard hardly had time to notice that the quiet old Martha was missing. Marnie's new autochef made her dinner parties the talk of the city's smarter social set, and she found herself the center of an inexhaustible crowd of attentive, handsome young men in tuxedoes. While Howard had abandoned the old her at parties, she saw little more of him now, because the good-looking young man adored her too much to leave her alone. She was welcome in the very best

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places and there wasn't a woman in town who dared exclude her from her invitation list. Marnie went everywhere.

If she was dissatisfied, it was only because Howard seemed lumpier and less attractive than usual, and the bumps and wrinkles in his evening clothes made him seem something less than the perfect accessory. She slipped away from him early in the evening each time they went out together, and she looked for him again only in the small hours, when it was time to collect him and go home.

But for all that, she still loved him, and it came as something of a blow when she discovered that it was no longer she who avoided him at parties—he was avoiding her. She first noticed it after an evening of dinner and dancing. She had been having a fascinating conversation with someone in consolidated metals, and it seemed to her the right touch—the final fillip—for the evening would be for the gentleman in question to see her standing next to Howard in the soft light, serene, beautiful, the doting wife.

"You must meet my husband," she murmured, stroking the metal magnate's lapel.

"Have you seen Howard?" she asked a friend nearby, and something in the way the friend shook his head and turned away from her made her a little uneasy.

Several minutes later, the metal magnate had taken his leave and Marnie was still looking for Howard. She found him at last, on a balcony, and she could have sworn that she saw him wave to a dark figure, which touched its hands to its lips and disappeared into the bushes just as she closed the balcony door.

"It's not very flattering, you know," she said, coiling around his arm.

"Mmmmm?" He hardly looked at her.

"Having to track you down like this," she said, fitting against him.

"Mmmm?"

She started to go on, but led him through the apartment and down to the front door. Even in the cab, she couldn't shake his reverie. She tucked his coattails into the cab with a solicitous little frown. And she brooded. There had been something disturbingly familiar about that figure on the balcony.

The next morning Marnie was up at an unaccustomed hour, dressing with exquisite care. She had been summoned to morning coffee with Edna Hotchkiss-Baines. For the first time, she had been invited to help with the Widows' and Orphans' Fund Bazaar. ("I've found somebody wonderful to help with the planning," the chichi Edna had confided. "You'll never guess who.")

Superb in an outfit that could stand even Edna's scrutiny, Mar-

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nie presented herself at the Hotchkiss-Baines door and followed the butler into the Hotchkiss-Baines breakfast room.

Edna Hotchkiss-Baines barely greeted her. She was engrossed in conversation with a squat, unassuming figure that slumped across the table from her, shoes slit to accommodate feet that were spreading now, violet-sprigged dress growing a little tight.

Face afire, Marnie fell back. She took a chair without speaking and leveled a look of hatred at the woman who held the town's most fashionable social leader enthralled—the dowdy, frumpy, lumpy old her.

It was only the beginning. Apparently the creature had cashed in the California ticket and used the fare and the thousand dollars to rent a small flat and buy a modest wardrobe. Now, to Marnie's helpless fury, it seemed to be going everywhere. It appeared at cocktail parties in a series of matronly crepe dresses ranging in color from taupe to dove grey. It sat on the most important committees and appeared at the most elegant dinners. No matter how exclusive the guest list or how gay the company, no matter how high Marnie's hopes that it had not been included, somebody had always invited it. It appeared behind her in clothing store mirrors when she was trying on new frocks and looked over her shoulder in restaurants when she dined with one of her devastating young men. It haunted her steps, looking just enough like her to make everyone uncomfortable, enough like everything Marnie hated to embarrass her.

Then one night she found Howard kissing it at a party.

At home a few hours later, he confronted her.

"Marnie, I want a divorce."

"Howard." She made clutching motions. "Is there . . ."

He sounded grave. "My dear, there's someone else. Well, it isn't exactly someone else."

"You don't mean—Howard, you can't be serious."

"I'm in love with the girl I married," he said. "A quiet girl, a grey-and-brown girl."

"That—" Her fashionable body was trembling. Her gemlike eyes were aflame. "That frumpy . . ."

"A home girl . . ." He was getting rhapsodic now. "Like the girl I married so many years ago."

"After all that money—the transformation—the new body—" Marnie's voice rose with every word. "The CHANGE?"

"I never asked you to change, Marnie." He smiled mistily. "You were so . . ."

"You'd drop me for that piece of suet?" She was getting shrill. "How could I face my *friends?*"

"You deserve somebody better looking," he said with a little sigh. "Somebody tall and slim. I'll just pack and go . . ."

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"All right, Howard." She managed a noble tone. "But not just yet." She was thinking fast. "There has to be a Decent Waiting Period . . ."

A period would give her time to handle this.

"If you wish, my dear." He had changed into his favorite flannel bathrobe. In times past, the old Martha had sat next to him on the couch in front of the television, she in her quilted house coat, he in his faithful robe. He stroked its lapels. "I just want you to realize that my mind is made up—we'll all be happier . . ."

"Of course," she said, and a hundred plans went through her mind. "Of course."

She sat alone for the rest of the night, drumming opalescent nails on her dressing table, tapping one slender foot.

And by morning, she had it. Something Howard had said had set her mind churning. "You deserve somebody better looking."

"He's right," she said aloud. "I do." And by the time it had begun to get light she had conceived of a way to get rid of the persistent embarrassment of the old her and the—homier elements of Howard at one stroke. As soon as Howard left for the office she began a series of long distance inquiries, and once she had satisfied her curiosity she called a number of friends and floated several discreet loans in the course of drinks before lunch.

There was a crate in the living room just two weeks later. "Howard," Marnie said, beckoning, "I have a surprise for you . . ."

He was just coming in, with the old Martha, from a date. They liked to sit in the kitchen over cocoa and talk. At a look from Marnie, the creature settled in a chair. It couldn't take its eyes off the coffin-shaped box. Howard stepped forward, brows wrinkling furrily. "What's this?" he asked, and then without waiting for her to answer, he murmured, "Didn't we have one of these around a few months ago?" and pulled the cord attached to the corner of the crate. It fell open—perhaps a little too easily—and the lid of the smooth ebony box sprang up under his fingers almost before he had touched the rosebud catch. The tissue paper was green this time, and if there had been an instruction book nestled on top, it was gone now.

Both the new Marnie and the old her watched raptly as Howard, oblivious of both of them, broke through the layers of tissue paper and with a spontaneous sound of pleasure grasped the figure in the box.

Both the new and the old woman watched as the papers began to swirl and rise, and they sat transfixed until there was a thud and the papers settled again.

When it was over, Marnie turned to the old her with a mali-

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cious grin. "Satisfied?" she asked. And then, eyes gleaming, she waited for the new Howard to rise from the box.

He came forth like a new Adam, ignoring both of them, and went to his own room for clothes.

While he was gone, the old Howard, a little frayed at the corners, almost buried under a fall of tissue, stirred and tried to rise.

"That's yours," Marnie said, giving the old her a dig in the ribs. "Better go help it up." And then she presented her face to the doorway, waiting with arms spread for the new Howard to reappear. After a few moments he came, godlike in one of Howard's pinstriped business suits.

"Darling," Marnie murmured, mentally cancelling dinner at the Hotchkiss-Bainses' and a Westport party with a new man.

"Darling," the new Howard said. And he swept past her to the old Martha, still scrabbling around in the tissue paper on the floor. Gently, with the air of a prince who has discovered the new Cinderella, he helped her to her feet. "Shall we go?" he asked.

Marnie watched, openmouthed. They did.

On the floor, the old Howard had gotten turned on its stomach somehow, and was floundering like a displaced fish. Marnie watched, taut with rage, too stricken to speak. The old Howard flapped a few more times, made it to its knees and then slipped on the tissue paper again. Hardly looking at it, Marnie smoothed the coif she had prepared for the Hotchkiss-Baines dinner that night. There was always the dinner—and the party in Westport. Dispassionately, she moved forward and kicked a piece of tissue out of the way. She drew herself up, supple, beautiful, and she seemed to find new strength. The old Howard flapped again.

"Oh get *up*," she said, and poked it with her toe. She was completely composed now. "Get up—*darling*," she spat.

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Damon Knight writes: "Suzanne Malaval writes that her age is 30, she is married to an engineer and has three children. She wrote some two-character dialogues which were performed in Montmartre cabarets . . . she writes now for numerous French fanzines and occasionally for Fiction *[F&SF's French sister-magazine]. She lives in Lorraine, 'two steps away from Joan of Arc's native village.' She apologizes for the brevity of this sketch, but says she hasn't got much to say about herself." Mme. Malaval's story, however, says something about herself, namely, that she has a salty sense of humor and a good knowledge of the ways and attitudes of the French peasantry. Which gives us a good opportunity to express a sentiment which we are never reluctant to express, anyway, to wit:* Vive la France!

THE DEVIL'S GOD-DAUGHTER

by Suzanne Malaval

(translated by Damon Knight)

WHEN FANCHE WAS BORN, her parents were sad, sad, for she was the eighth child of eight, and finding a godfather in the neighborhood was practically impossible.

Just the same, she was a pretty little thing, Fanche in her cradle—plump as a little pig, pink, her cheek smooth as fruit from the tree.

The mama was sleeping, Fanche beside her in the big bed, when the devil, the real one, the most horned, came knocking on the door.

Sitting up with a start, the mama said "Come in," and the devil gladly obliged.

"Good morning, woman! I come to ask for your Fanche as my god-daughter."

"Oh, no!" said the mama.

The eighth child of eight, already Fanche was loved eight times more than the others.

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The devil, he was a perfect scoundrel, but he didn't say anything: when a woman just out of childbed talks in that tone of voice, even the devil himself has nothing to say.

Only, the papa coming back from the rye fields said yes, that he did, without looking at his wife who was making faces at him.

Fanche was asleep, pretty as a daisy.

For sure, it wasn't at the church that they had the baptism with such a godfather. But it was a gay, noisy baptism, with many mortal sins.

It was only the mama who was sad: everything she ate tasted of sulphur.

Little Fanche grew bigger. She went through seven years like nothing.

The brothers, the sisters, the whole kit and kaboodle took her along to mass. The mama, she felt her heart beating.

Arriving at the holy church, she found it impossible to bring the little one in. It was as if she were planted in the ground.

The poor little thing pushed with her feet, pulled with her hips, but nothing: she stayed where she was, stuck in the ground like a rosebush.

They went back home, not very proud.

Time passed.

Fanche was fifteen, so beautiful it was a marvel.

When she watched the flocks, the dog was utterly fascinated, and the sheep too.

One day when she was walking in the fields, she saw a gentleman coming who made her feel cold to the bottom of her soul.

"I'm your godfather," he said.

She had not known she had a godfather of such ugliness.

"Come with me!"

She was obliged to do as he asked: he had taken her by the wrist, squeezing hard enough to make her arm go numb.

Hell is so close to the earth that she was there, quickly, the poor god-daughter.

"You're queen of all this here. You ask, you get," the devil told her, with a sweeping gesture.

"I want to go back home."

But of course that was impossible.

Up above, they were worried, they searched for her in the bottoms of the ponds; but the mama knew very well what had happened.

Fanche didn't cry long. She was a crafty little thing, that Fanche, and never at a loss.

She made herself nice, sweet and good, so much so that the devil's wife grew jealous. She was dark, with a squashed nose, and anyone who stroked her would prick his hand.

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Also the devil spent a lot of time looking at his god-daughter, blonde as the wheat, fresh-cheeked, her voice like a song.

Fanche, my heaven! she was never out of the godfather's sight.

She was not astonished at all, but really not at all, when he came up to her and said: "Fanche, dolling, I want you give me a kiss."

"Uh-uh, godfather, no kiss!"

"I'll take one by force, if you don't let me."

"Godfather, you know I'd bite you."

He didn't doubt it.

"Dolling, on the forehead!"

"Not on the forehead."

"On the ear."

"Not on the ear, not anywhere."

The devil, he got furious, he wanted that kiss so much.

"Fanche, my godchild, pull up skirt, let me see your calf."

"No, godfather, not that far."

"As far as the ankle."

"Not even as far as the ankle!"

"If you don't, I grab you by the waist and pull up as far as the knee!"

"Godfather, you know I'd scratch you."

My heaven! how he knew it.

It was always the same routine.

"Listen, godchild, I ask you a riddle. If you guess it, I give you the keys to Hell. If you flunk, you give me that kiss . . . and not on the forehead! 'What is it that's as big as the Eiffel Tower, and doesn't weigh as much as a grain of flour?"

Fanche was alarmed to hear this, for she knew that in taking the kiss, he'd slip his hand into her bosom, down there where it was pink and round.

Sure as sure, it meant damnation. After death, Hell again.

The devil's wife saw how the land lay, and knew that if she lost, the devil would bewitch her.

She whispered: "It's the shadow of the Eiffel Tower."

All Fanche had to do was repeat it. How furious he was, the devil!

"Listen, godchild! I ask you another riddle. If you guess it, I give you the winged horse. If you lose, I pull up your dress . . . and not as far as the calf! 'On the wooden shoe of Father Fred, what can it be that walks on its head?"

Fanche was in despair, for she knew that in pulling up her dress, he'd rumple her panties, where they were so well stitched.

Sure as sure, it meant damnation. After death, Hell again.

The devil's wife saw how the land lay, and didn't want the god-daughter to stay.

She whispered: "It's the nails in the shoe." The devil, he turned completely green at that. But a promise is a promise, even for Satan.

He gave the keys of Hell, he gave the winged horse, and so long.

When Fanche found herself at the door of her house, it was raining in the sunlight.

She knew that meant the devil was beating his wife.

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The name of James H. Schmitz is new to this Magazine, but not to the field, for it has appeared in science fiction and fantasy magazines since the days of the old and great UNKNOWN, olav ha-sholem. *We hope it will appear here often from now on. The brief biography on the jacket of his novel, A TALE OF TWO CLOCKS, (Torquil Press, /62), says that he "was born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1911, of American parents. Aside from several trips to the United States, he lived in Germany until 1938, returning to America with the outbreak of World War II. He flew with an Army Air Corps group in the Southern Pacific Theater during the war . . . and now lives with his wife in Inglewood, California." Mr. Schmitz is also the author of a collection of SF stories, AGENT OF VEGA (Gnome, /60), and an engineer by profession. His present occupation is writing, his principal interest, "learning to write more proficiently . . . if I didn't have anything else to do, the thing I'd like most would be to take a month for fishing, boating, swimming, sunning and snooping around marine or lake life generally, in pleasant company and with an ample supply of iced Schlitz beer in the locker." He sounds like a Nice Man, and we hope he makes it. We trust that his preference in brands of beer has nothing to do with the subject of his story, Subliminal Perception, an attribute most of us were unaware of until a few years ago; when we learned that it could be manipulated by TV and motion pictures flashing an image or a phrase on and off the screen so rapidly as to be unobserved by the supraliminal, or concious, mind. This devilish device has not been much heard of lately, one hopes it is unused. If not, his story could come true without the need of ——but we are getting ahead of things.*

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"Now the Seven Deadly Arts are: Music, Literature, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Dancing, Acting. The Mercy of God has luckily purified these once pagan inventions, and transformed them into saving instruments of grace. Yet it behooves us to examine with the utmost diligence the possible sources of evil latent in each and every one of these arts. Then we shall consider some of the special forms of sin that may develop from them. St. Chrysostom warned the faithful . . ."
—the preacher, in Huneker's "Visionaries"

THESE ARE THE ARTS

by James H. Schmitz

HUGH GROVER WAS SITTING IN the TV room of an old but spacious and luxuriously equipped bomb shelter located in a forested section of the rambling Grover estate. The shelter had been constructed by Hugh's grandfather sixty years earlier and, while never actually used as a place of refuge, had been kept in good condition by various members of the Grover family, who retained a strong touch of foresight and prudence in their habits even through the easygoing early decades of the Twenty-first Century. The entrance to the shelter was camouflaged, and only the Grover household and their intimates were informed of its existence and whereabouts.

Hugh, now a man of forty and the last living member of the family, looked very thoughtful and puzzled as he switched off the TV set and audiophil attachment and closed up a bull-roarer recording he had placed on the table beside him. He pushed away the tall mirror he had set up so he could watch the screen without looking at it directly, and climbed out of his chair. He had intended mirror and recording to be precautionary devices, but they had turned out to be superfluous. He had seen and heard nothing of the Galcom Craze.

It was possible that the World Government—wonder of wonders!—had heeded his warnings, or perhaps somebody else's, and banned the stuff completely. In the past few hours, Hugh had

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dialed every major station on earth. From none of them had the improbably beautiful face of a Galcom Teacher looked out at him; no Galcom symbol appeared suddenly in the screen. Nor had the audiophil programs produced any of those curious little cross-ripples of sound which were not openly connected with Galcom, but which Hugh had considered to be definitely one of its devices.

The absence of these items in itself was, of course, all to the good. But it seemed odd that, in addition, there hadn't been the slightest mention of Galcom during the hours Hugh listened and watched. He was the reverse of a TV addict, but he felt it improbable that what had started as the biggest TV Craze of recent years could simply have dropped from the public's interest again during the two weeks he was living in the bomb shelter. It seemed much more likely that the lack of reference to it was due to an official taboo.

He had predicted that the embittered settlers of Mars Territory would carry out a space attack on Earth after first softening up the population through the Galcom Craze. Did this deliberate lack of mention of the Craze suggest that certain elements of the danger still existed? Hugh Grover could think of no other reason for it.

He frowned, his finger moving towards a button to summon his secretary, Andy Britton, who shared the shelter with him and was at present asleep in another section. Then he checked himself. Andy made a good listener when Hugh felt like airing his thoughts, but it might be better to ponder this curious situation by himself first.

It had been through Andy Britton that Hugh first learned of the Galcom Craze. They had come in by Atlantic rocket from the Jura Mountains that evening with a box of newly uncovered Bronze Age artifacts to add to Hugh's private museum. The Grover residence was on the fringes of the little village of Antoinette, three miles upriver from the bomb shelter, in the direction of the sizable town of South Valley. Hugh unpacked while Andy drove into Antoinette to buy dinner supplies. He came back laughing.

"A new advertising craze has started up," he said. "This one might interest you, Hugh!"

"Why should it?" Hugh asked.

"Symbols," Andy told him. "Primitive meditation brought up to date on TV! Practically every big station seems to be involved. They have overlapping Symbol Hours around the clock. You can't guess who's doing all this, so I'll tell you. It's the first representatives of the Galactic Community to reach the Solar System. How about that?"

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Hugh grunted and asked him what he thought he was talking about. Galcom, it appeared, was short for Galactic Community. The representatives were inhumanly beautiful women or inhumanly handsome men. They were referred to as The Teachers. Their mission was to facilitate the adoption of Earth into the Community by instructing its inhabitants in a New Method of Thought and Communication, which would enable them to exchange ideas with other Galcom entities, and also one another, with the greatest of ease and speed. The New Method could be acquired by devoting a little study daily to the Galcom Symbols being presented on purchased TV time.

It was, of course, a promotion hoax of some sort. After the World Supreme Court established circa 1990 that publicly to question the truthfulness of statements made through an advertising medium was to act in restriction of trade, and hence illegal, the way had been open for the staging of truly colossal attention-getting tricks. Throughout his life, Hugh Grover had been vaguely aware of a constant succession of TV Crazes of varying magnitude. When he thought of them at all, he concluded that in the comfortable world-wide suburbanity of the period people grew increasingly hungry for sensations of even the most idiotic variety. And since no corner of Earth was without its quota of TV sets, a really big Craze could command virtually universal attention. As a rule, they built up for a month or two, while the more sophisticated speculated on who was behind it this time and what actually was to be promoted, and the less sophisticated—time after time, apparently—took the gag at face value and very seriously. Andy reported that the smart money had begun to settle on Mars Territory as the Galcom sponsor within the first week and that the Craze was expected to resolve itself eventually as a renewed bid for Unlimited Free Water from Earth for the Territory.

"They seem to have hooked an unusual percentage of Believers this time," Andy said—Believers being, of course, the people who again had bought the gag. He had run into five or six persons in Antoinette who assured him with some excitement that the Galactic Community really existed, that this Craze was no Craze at all but a perfectly sincere and earnest attempt to help Earth raise itself to Galcom's lofty standards. Two of Andy's informants by now had achieved moments of direct mental communication with a Galcom Teacher, an experience described as enthralling and spiritually satisfying.

Hugh felt mildly disgusted as he not infrequently was with the ways of society in which he found

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himself. But since the study of symbolism and its use by primitive societies was in fact one of his most intensively cultivated hobbies, he was curious enough to turn on the TV set after dinner.

Immediately, he found himself face to face with one of the Galcom Teachers.

This one was female, and there could be no disputing the flawless and—figuratively, at least—the unearthly quality of her loveliness. Women irritated Hugh Grover as a rule, and he tended to avoid their company; but the Teacher's impact was not lost on him. He had been staring at her for almost twenty seconds before he discovered that the melodious voice was repeating some of the things Andy had told him. The arts the station's viewers were being taught here, she said, were not designed to make them worthy of membership in the Galactic Community, as some appeared to have assumed. No—they were worthy indeed, and the intention was only to dissolve the barriers of linguistic difference, to do away with the awkwardness of spoken words which led so often and easily to misunderstandings. Words were not necessary when mind could speak to mind. And now, if the viewers would give their relaxed attention to the Galcom symbols they would be shown, they would find their minds begin to open out gently and softly . . . like beautiful flowers. . . .

In spite of this sweetly fluted lunacy, Hugh did not turn off the TV. He was still starting in fascination at the exquisite creature in the screen when she suddenly faded from view and he was looking instead at a Galcom symbol.

In almost the same instant, the screen went blank.

It took Hugh some seconds to realize that he himself had shut off the set. He was not in the least tempted to turn it on again. He had been badly startled. At the moment the symbol appeared, there had been a distinct sensation as if something were tugging at his thoughts . . . and then something else inside him went tight, closed up; and the sensation ended.

Once before, he'd had a very similar experience. A psychiatrist had attempted to hypnotize him; and while Hugh, consciously, had been completely willing to let it happen, the attempt ended in absolute failure. At that time, too, there had been, as Hugh floated along mentally, his attention only half on the medical man's words, a sudden awareness of shutting off their effect and remaining closed to it, of having become impenetrable now and secure. And there was nothing that Hugh—consciously again—could do about it. He could not be hypnotized.

And what could that mean here? Brief as his glimpse of the Galcom symbol had been, he could

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recall it distinctly—a pale-blue, glowing, rather intricate design of markings which reminded Hugh of nothing so much as some of the ideographic characters used in the written Chinese language of past centuries. In itself, there was nothing sinister or alarming about its appearance. But Hugh could remember very vividly the feeling of something pulling at his thoughts. . . .

Hugh Grover continued to sit before the dead set for a while, becoming increasingly disturbed. At last, he got up and put a call through to the home of an acquaintance in the East who was an advertising executive.

The acquaintance confirmed Andy Britton's report on the Galcom Craze. It was a big thing, a very big thing. After only a few days, it was beginning to edge into the top popularity spot. In his opinion, it was likely to develop into the most successful TV spectacular of the past twenty years. Yes, Mars Territory definitely was backing it. The acquaintance couldn't yet see just how the Territory planned to tie in its perennial demand for Earth water, but that certainly would turn out to be the angle. Hugh presumably had become interested in the program because of its use of symbols? One heard that there appeared to be a very deft adaptation of neo-Jungian techniques involved. What was Hugh's opinion?

Hugh replied cautiously that he hadn't yet seen a Galcom program, but that it seemed possible. What effect did the symbols produce on the viewers?

"They're euphoric," the acquaintance said. It was difficult to be more specific because of wide variations in individual response. It was a really remarkable approach, a unique accomplishment. Yes, he understood there'd been negative reactions but in such an insignificant number that they could not affect the progress of the Craze in any way . . . Oh, perhaps point five per cent. There were always cranks and alarmists who objected to genuine innovations in the programs.

After Hugh hung up, he did some more intensive thinking. He was now thoroughly concerned, but there were reasons to be cautious about any action he took. Officially, he could be fitted very well into his acquaintance's classification of cranks and alarmists. He was known to be a wealthy eccentric—wealthy enough to get away with a degree of eccentricity which a man of moderate means could hardly have afforded. He was an amateur scientist. Even his friends regarded his preoccupation with things of the past, things of the mind, as somewhat morbid. And there had been a period ten years before, after an ill-fated attempt at marriage, when he suffered a quite serious nervous break-

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down and required extensive psychiatric treatment.

He had developed a considerable degree of self-awareness over the years. He knew that his interests and studies reflected his mental organization . . . an organization in which conscious and unconscious processes which in most men were kept much more neatly distinct tended to merge to an uncomfortable degree. He knew also that he had, in consequence, developed defensive reactions which the ordinary person simply did not have, and ordinarily had no need for. He could not be hypnotized. Drugs which were supposed to reduce resistance to hypnosis merely raised his own level. And he could not be affected by the Galcom symbols. But neither of those things would be true for the vast majority of Earth's population.

He had made a careful study of the connections between specific sensory impressions and mental effects. Form, color, motion—these things held unique meanings for the unconscious mind and aroused responses of which the conscious man might not be in the least aware.

His mind had produced an instantaneous, violent reaction to his first glimpse of a Galcom symbol. It had sealed itself away from something it regarded as a very dangerous threat.

What would the same impression be doing to the mind of the average man, which had never needed to learn such stringent measures of defense?

In Hugh Grover's opinion, it could plunge the possessor of that mind . . . after not too many encounters . . . into a state of psychotic helplessness.

And who would be interested in doing such a thing to the people of Earth?

Precisely Mars Territory, of course. . . .

He had been on Mars some years before. Except for World Government officials, whose duties held them there, not many Earth citizens visited the Territory. It held no attractions for tourists. Hugh Grover's interest was drawn by reports that excavations had begun again in some of the ruins of the aboriginal Martian culture scattered sparsely about the Territory. Earlier archeological efforts had produced insignificant results; the ruins were over a quarter of a million years old and usually buried, and there was no evidence that the native race had advanced beyond the level of walled villages before it died out. But Hugh decided he would like to visit some of the new digs in person.

It had been a frustrating experience which gave him a very different picture of the Territorial settlers and in particular of their ruling group than he had obtained

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on Earth. They were a hard, sullen breed of men, rulers of a barren empire with the potential of a great industrial development—a development still stalled by Earth's refusal to supply Mars Territory with the required amounts of water. Hugh thought he understood the reason for that. Martian technology, spurred by necessity, was at least on a par with Earth's. Given unlimited water it would forge ahead. And once it was sufficiently ahead, complacent suburban Earth would be virtually at the mercy of a society which had learned again to fight and work relentlessly for what it wanted. It was hardly surprising that the World Government was reluctant to go to enormous expense to help bring such a situation about.

But it made Earth's citizens very unpopular on Mars. Hugh's attempts to obtain permission to visit the ruins of the prehistoric culture continued to run into unaccountable difficulties and delays, and the local Earth officials at last advised him quietly to give the matter up. If he did succeed in getting into the Territorial backlands, they could not be responsible for his safety there.

At the time, Hugh had thought he was confronting simple malice. But there was another explanation. If an aboriginal symbol science had existed on Mars in the distant past, Territorial scientists might have been studying its principles in order to learn how to adapt them to produce effects on the human mind. In other words, the tools of the Galcom Craze were being prepared . . . and, naturally, an Earthman would not have been a welcome visitor. It was quite likely, Hugh decided, that he wouldn't have got alive out of Mars Territory again if he had been too persistent in his efforts.

One could conclude further that Mars Territory was now at war with Earth.

The Galcom symbols would . . . in the opinion of the Territorials, at least . . . determine the issue. The derangement of the mental structure of the great majority of Earth's population could be far advanced before any outer evidence of general psychosis appeared. Then the Territorial space attack would be launched.

Mars Territory, Hugh thought, was making a mistake. Earth's material advantages should still be too great for them and in the end Earth should win out. But for the private citizens who retained their sanity, the interim period would be extremely unpleasant and dangerous.

Partway through his reflections, he had pressed the audiophil button on the TV set without giving the action much consideration, and the familiar muted flows of classical music were accompanying his thoughts. Now, suddenly, he sat bolt upright. There had been

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a subtle intrusion in the music, an odd, quick, light, up-and-down rippling, like the crossing of two threads of sound, which was not a proper part of the piece to which he was listening.

Almost with that thought came an internal reaction very similar to what Hugh experienced at his glimpse of the Galcom symbol . . . a sense of something pulling, tugging gently at his mind, a dreamlike distortion; then the quick, solid block of mental resistance which shut the feeling off. Hugh reached out hastily and turned off the audiophil.

So they were not limited to visual channels in their attack on Earth's minds! Men like himself who ignored TV presentations could still be approached along other routes. . . .

That decided him. This was no speculation but quite real, quite serious personal danger. He realized now that he had been getting sleepy for the past few minutes—and he could not be sure he had not heard that curious cross-ripple of sound several times before it penetrated into his awareness. When the attack was insidious enough, his subconscious watchdogs might be much less dependable than he had believed.

The important thing then was to look out for himself. Hugh was aware that he had no overwhelming or all-inclusive fondness for his fellow men; on the whole, they were there, and he could tolerate them. A few, like Andy Britton, he rather liked, when they weren't being irritating. Nevertheless, his decision now to take Andy to the old Grover bomb shelter with him was due primarily to the fact that Andy was a very capable young man whose assistance during the possibly trying period ahead might be invaluable.

As for the others, he would try to warn them in time to avert or modify the approaching disaster; but it would have to be done in a manner which could not affect his own safety. Though Mars Territory looked like the responsible agent for what was happening, it must have allies on Earth in positions where they could deal with interference . . . and with those who interfered. Hugh spent an hour outlining his conclusions about the Galcom Craze in every detail. He then made approximately fifty copies of the message and addressed them to various members of the government, to news agencies, and to a number of important people whose background indicated that they might give serious thought to such a warning. He was careful to mention nothing that could serve to identify him and left the messages unsigned. Andy Britton was dispatched to South Valley to drop them into the mailing system there. After the secretary returned, Hugh

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told him what he believed was occurring and what his plans were.

Andy kept his face carefully expressionless, but it was plain what his own theory was—old Hugh had cracked up at last. However, he had a highly paid job, and if Hugh wanted them to sit out the next few weeks in a bomb shelter, that would clearly be all right with Andy Britton. Before dawn, all preparations had been made. They closed up the town house in Antoinette again, and installed themselves unobtrusively in the forest shelter down the river.

The next two weeks passed . . . to all appearances . . . uneventfully. Andy Britton dutifully avoided the shelter's TV room, and he and Hugh took turns observing the air traffic above the river and the road gliders passing along the highway from the shelter lookout panel. There were no signs of disturbance of any kind. Andy, an active individual by nature, began to show some degree of restiveness but made no attempts to argue Hugh out of his ideas.

Hugh saw no reason to rush matters. For the time being, he had secured himself from the Galcom attack, both as to possible personal effects and the dangers that could arise from a demented populace. His warning might or might not be heeded. Others might see the threat and take steps to end it. Whatever was to occur, he had withdrawn to a position where he could wait events out with the greatest degree of safety.

He began to give his attention to methods whereby he could . . . without exposing himself . . . regain a more complete contact with the outer world than simple observation from the shelter provided. Out of this came eventually the arrangement in the TV room with the mirror and the bull-roarer recording. The Galcom symbols, judging from the sample he had seen, were asymmetrical designs. If the specific visual image produced by them brought about some effect on the mind, the effect should be nullified by a reversal of the image. Hence the mirror through which he could observe the TV screen without looking directly at it. He was cancelling out the Gorgon's head. The bull-roarer recording was to smother Galcom's audible form of attack, the drowsiness-producing cross-ripplings of light sound. The switch which started the recording would be in Hugh's left hand whenever he turned on the set, his thumb pressed down on its release. At any loss of alertness, he would let go automatically. The election of a bull-roarer with its own ritual implications hadn't been necessary for this purpose; but the notion pleased Hugh and—the subconscious being the suggestible and superstitious entity it was—a little deliberate countermagic should strengthen the effect of sheer noise.

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In spite of these supporting devices, Hugh had intended to proceed very prudently with his investigation. He couldn't be sure they would actually give him more protection than his own resources could provide. He hadn't forgotten the disconcerting feeling of having been caught off guard by a barely perceptible sound pattern, and there might, after all, be more Galcom tricks than the two he had encountered. The lack of anything in the least abnormal then in the TV programs he scanned through was rather disconcering in itself. Something, obviously, *had* happened—must have happened. The Galcom program hadn't vanished without cause.

The appearance of it was that Galcom had been banned from the networks by World Government edict. The entire business of symbol trickery and its effects might have been turned over meanwhile to some scientific group for orderly investigation. Mars Territory could have been put under an embargo. And it was conceivable that Territorial raiders were known or suspected to be in space; and that while the Earth fleets hunted for them, the whole affair was being toned down deliberately in the networks to avoid a panic. There was, after all, no effective way of protecting the population from space attack except by stopping a raider before he got too close.

The appearance of it then was a little mystifying, but not necessarily alarming. It concurred with the undisturbed look of the countryside traffic outside the shelter.

But those reflections did not at all change Hugh's feeling about the situation. The feeling told him with increasing clarity that there was some hidden menace in the lack of mention about Galcom. That the silence covered a waiting trap. And that specifically he . . . Hugh Grover . . . was being threatened.

He could acknowledge that, theoretically, that presented the picture of a paranoid personality. But the hunch was too strong to be ignored. He didn't intend to ignore it. He could lose nothing . . . except for strengthening Andy's notions about his loss of mental competence, which was hardly important . . . by acting on the assumption that the hunch was correct. If it was correct, if there was a trap waiting outside, the trap could be sprung. Not by him, but by Andy Britton.

Hugh rubbed his chin thoughtfully. There was another place in the northern Andes which could be turned into at least as secure a hide-out as Grandfather Grover's bomb shelter. In some respects—the nearest neighbors would be many miles away—it should be a more dependable one. He could get there overnight with one of the pair of jet rigs hanging in the shelter storeroom. For the sake of ob-

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taining definite information, which would either confirm or disprove his suspicions, he could, therefore, risk losing the bomb shelter.

And he could—though he hoped nothing would happen to Andy—risk losing Andy.

Andy Britton was in the kitchen section, having breakfast. He looked up rather blearily when Hugh came in. His red hair was still uncombed and he had obviously just come awake.

"Mind coming along to the TV room a moment?" Hugh asked. "I've found something but I'm not quite sure what it means."

"What have you found?"

"I'd sooner let you see for yourself."

In the TV room, Andy looked at the mirror and recording with controlled distaste, asked, "Want me to use those?"

"It can't do any harm," Hugh said. "Here—I'll hold the switch for the bull-roarer myself. Now go ahead."

Andy studied his face quizzically, then turned on the TV set and clicked in a station at random. He watched the screen through the mirror, looked over at Hugh again.

"Try another one," Hugh suggested.

Ten minutes later, Andy, face very thoughtful, switched off the set, asked, "Same thing, everywhere?"

"I've been going down through the list these last three hours," Hugh said. "I don't believe I missed a station of any significance. I didn't hear a word about the Galcom Craze. Odd, isn't it?"

Andy agreed it was very odd indeed.

"What do you make of it?" Hugh asked.

Andy's lips quirked. "Isn't it obvious? Everyone in the world . . . except you and I, of course . . . has learned by now how to communicate with the alien races of the Galactic Community. Last Monday, the Solar System was elevated to full membership. Why keep the thing going after that?" He pondered a moment, added, "I owe you an apology, of course, Hugh."

"Why?"

"I thought you were tottering, and I guess I showed it. Now it looks as if you were right. Something stopped the Craze in midswing. And only our good old paternal World Government could have done it."

"The Craze couldn't have simply run itself out . . . naturally?"

Andy shook his head. "I followed a lot of them when I was still young and foolish. That Galcom deal was good for another six weeks. It didn't run out naturally. It was stopped. And unless there was something *mighty* wrong about those symbols—just like you said—it wouldn't have been

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stopped." He grinned suddenly, his face lightening. "Know something? When we walk out of here now—when they find out who it was that shot off those warning messages all over the world two weeks ago—I'll be a hero's secretary!"

Hugh hesitated, said, "I'm not so sure about that, Andy."

"Huh?" The grin faded from Andy's face, was replaced by a cautious "Now what?" expression. He asked, "What do you mean, Hugh?"

Hugh said, "I don't want to seem unduly apprehensive." He indicated the TV screen. "But what we saw there does suggest something like a conspiracy to me."

"A conspiracy?"

"Exactly. I told you I was sitting here for three hours checking through the various stations. Why in all that time did no one even mention the late Galcom Craze?"

"I wouldn't know," Andy said with a trace of exasperation. "But the obvious way to find out is to get out of here and start asking questions. We can't spend the rest of our lives lurking in a bomb shelter, Hugh."

Hugh smiled. "I don't intend to, believe me. But I do think we should be a little careful about asking questions." He considered, went on, "As a first step, let's wheel out the flitter and look things over from the air for a while."

Andy said with strained patience, "That isn't going to tell us what happened to the Galcom Craze. Now suppose I put the midget road glider in the back of the flitter and . . . ."

"Why not?" Hugh looked at his watch. "It'll be getting dark in a few hours. If it seems safe to let you do a little reconnoitering on foot around South Valley, that would be the time to start out."

Shortly after sunset, Hugh brought the flitter down to a quiet stretch of the road leading from Antoinette to South Valley. Andy swung the glider out of the flitter's rear compartment, straightened it, and climbed into the saddle. He grinned at Hugh, said, "I'll be careful . . . don't worry! See you at the bomb shelter early in the morning."

Hugh nodded. "I'll wait for you inside."

He watched the road glider disappear around the bend towards South Valley, and took the flitter up again. From the air, nothing out of the ordinary appeared to have occurred, or to be occurring, in the South Valley district. In Antoinette and the other towns and villages over which they had passed, people plainly were going about their everyday activities with no suggestion of an emergency or of disturbances. But Hugh did not intend to change any part of his plans. His instincts still smelled a trap.

By nightfall, he had locked each section of the bomb shelter individually, then left it, locking the

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camouflaged entrance behind him. Carrying one of the jet rigs and a knapsack of camping equipment, and with a heavy automatic pistol fastened to his belt, he moved uphill through the trees surrounding the shelter until he reached a point some three hundred yards away from where he could watch both the approaches from the river road half a mile below and the air above the forest. Here he took out a pair of powerful night glasses, laid his other equipment beside a tree, and settled down to wait.

If Andy showed up unaccompanied in the morning, he would be there to receive him and find out what had happened during the past two weeks. But if Andy did not come alone, or if the shelter was approached by others in the interval, Hugh would vanish quietly among the big trees behind him. Once over the crest of the hill, he would be in the thick timber of a government preserve. He was an expert outdoorsman and felt no concern about his ability to remain out of sight there. Before the next morning, the jet rig would have carried him to his new retreat while any searchers would still be engaged in attempting to open the last locked sections of the bomb shelter where he was supposed to be.

Any searchers . . . Hugh admitted to himself that he could find no rational answer to the question of who should be searching for him or what their purpose might be. His hunch didn't tell him that. What it told him was to stay ready to run if he wanted to survive.

He intended to do just that.

Andy Britton appeared riding the road glider along the route from Antoinette around nine in the morning. Hugh watched him approach through the glasses. Nothing had happened during the night. Near morning, when he began to feel traces of drowsiness, he had taken wake-up pills and come alert again.

The glider could not be used in the rough natural terrain of the estate grounds. Hugh saw Andy bring it to a stop near the edge of the estate, push it out of sight among some bushes and start up towards the shelter. They had agreed that he should come on foot, rather than have Hugh bring the flitter down to the road to pick him up. Hugh remained where he was, continuing to scan the sky, the road in both directions and the woods below him as Andy came climbing higher, disappearing for minutes at a time among the trees, then emerging into open ground again.

There was no one with him, following him, or watching him from the air. Hugh stood up finally, settled knapsack and jet rig over his shoulders, and started downhill towards the shelter, still careful to remain out of sight himself.

He was standing concealed

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among the bushes above the shelter entrance when Andy appeared directly below him.

"Up here, Andy!" Hugh said.

Andy stopped in his tracks, stood peering about, as if in bewilderment.

Hugh repeated, "Up here. Right above you . . . see me? That's right. Now come on up."

Watching the secretary scramble awkwardly through the shrubbery towards him, Hugh felt a sharp thrill of renewed apprehension, for Andy was stumbling like a man who was either drunk or on the very edge of exhaustion. Then, as he came closer, Hugh could see that his face was pale and drawn. A dazed face, Hugh told himself . . . a shocked face. Caution!

He said sharply, the sense of danger pounding through him, "That's close enough to talk! Stop there."

Andy stopped obediently twelve feet away, stood staring at Hugh, then at the knapsack and jet rig Hugh had let slide to the ground, and at the pistol belted to Hugh's side. A look of growing comprehension came into his face.

"Yes," Hugh said coldly, "I'm ready to move out if necessary. Is it?"

Andy seemed to be struggling for words. Then he said, his voice thick and harsh, "I don't think that will do any good, Hugh. You were wrong, you know."

"About what?"

"Mars Territory. They weren't behind the Galcom Craze. . . ." His voice faltered.

"Go ahead. Then who was behind it?"

"Hugh, don't you see? The Galcom Teachers *were* aliens. They took over Mars Territory two months ago, before they ever showed up on Earth."

Staring at Andy's sweating, anguished face, Hugh felt a dryness come into his throat. He asked, "Are you trying to tell me there is such a thing as the Galactic Community—that those Teachers were its missionaries, just as they claimed to be?"

Andy shook his head. "No. It's worse than that. It's a lot worse than that. You were right about the symbols. They were doing things to people's minds through them. But it wasn't to teach us how to communicate with others. It's almost the other way around."

"The other . . . try to make sense, Andy!"

"I'm trying to. Those Teachers are the servants or slaves of another race. They were sent here because they can be made to look and sound like humans. The others are telepaths and the way they handle their servants is by telepathic orders. They're in control of whole planets, whole races. They couldn't ordinarily have got control of Earth because there were hardly any human beings with enough telepathic sensitivity to receive

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their orders and respond to them. So that's what was to be done through the Galcom Craze and the symbols . . . soften us up mentally to the point where we could understand the master race's orders."

"And it succeeded?"

"Of course, it succeeded. They're already here. They arrived on Earth almost a week ago."

"Then why . . . ."

"Why does everything look so peaceful?" Andy asked bitterly. "Why shouldn't it? When they give a human an order, the human obeys. He can't help it. They don't want our economy to break down. They don't want panics and anarchy. This is a valuable planet and their property. Everybody's been told to keep on with their regular activities, just as if nothing had happened. So that's exactly what they do.

"But they can *tell* you what's happened if you start asking them questions. Oh, Lord, can they tell you about it!" Andy's face wrinkled up and tears ran down his cheeks. "They've started taking people away in their ships now. Our surplus population, they say. Nobody knows what happens to . . . ."

Hugh said, shocked, "But they couldn't have got control of everybody. Not so easily! Not so fast!"

"No, not everybody. There were the people like ourselves who just hadn't watched the programs. And what they call 'immunes'—anyone who doesn't react to a telepathic command and won't respond to conditioning. What's the difference? There weren't enough of either. The immunes are being rounded up and killed. The others get the treatment."

Take Andy or leave him? Andy could still be very useful. . . .

"Andy," he said, "we'll have to act quickly. If we stay here until they get everything organized, we won't be able to move without being spotted. Here are the shelter keys . . . catch them! That's right. Now get in there and get out your jet rig. We'll lock up the shelter and leave at once."

Andy nodded. "And then, Hugh?"

"There's another place I know of. Down south, up in the mountains. Nobody else around for miles . . . we'll be safe there a long time. It's stocked up for years." Hugh bent for knapsack and rig, added, "After we get there, we'll see. It's quite probable that I'm an immune myself. We may locate others. I . . . ."

There was a sudden noise behind him. Hugh turned sharply. Andy stood four feet away, the small gun in his hand pointing straight at Hugh's head.

"You *are* an immune, Hugh," he said, chokingly, "But I'm not—I'm not!"

The tears poured down his face as he pulled the trigger. ◀▶

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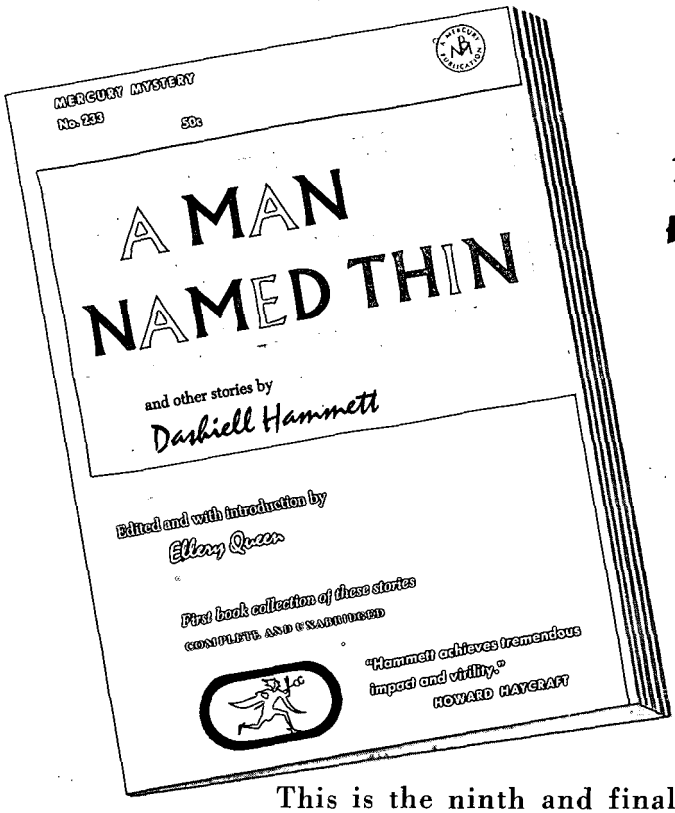

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